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LONDON SOCIETY.

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.

VOLUME X.

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LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY, 1866.

WHO WINS MISS BURTON?

A Tale of the London Season.

CHAPTER I.

THE London Season was over, and Agatha Burton was not engaged. Mrs. Burton had taken a house in Wilton Crescent, and done everything that could be done to forward her daughter's matrimonial interests, and was obliged to own that she had failed.

Mrs. Burton was a widow, with an income that was comparatively moderate. Agatha was her only daughter; but she had also a son, who was five or six years older than Agatha, and who had just got his Company in a cavalry regiment. If Mrs. Burton had lived in the country, she might have done so with the greatest comfort; but she had always been an ambitious, worldly woman, craving for excitement, so she preferred living far beyond her means for a certain number of months in London or Paris, and economising for the remainder of the year. Latterly she had felt justified in going even beyond her usual expenditure, in the hope that Agatha would marry well; and, up to the last few days before they left town, it seemed probable that her wildest dreams might be realized.

Agatha was only nineteen, and beautiful—sufficiently beautiful to be conspicuous among the hundreds of lovely women who are gathered together during the season in the million-peopled city. Agatha's was not a beauty that grew upon you; but it dazzled you all at once. The magnificent dark flashing eyes; the masses of raven hair, contrasting

well with a skin that was in colour almost like alabaster, save for the bright but delicate red of the lips and cheeks; nor was her figure less perfect than her face. Tall and slight, but finely rounded; her Grecian head set upon her shoulders with matchless dignity, and undulating grace in all her movements.

Agatha Burton had created quite a sensation in Town. On her first appearance in the parks, opera, or ball-room, 'Who is she?' had been the universal query; and she had, in consequence of the public voice of approbation, been received into circles which she otherwise might never have entered. Agatha had, of course, many admirers; and there were several men, any one of whom Mrs. Burton would gladly have welcomed as a son-in-law a year before; but Agatha's London successes had quite altered the case; and the very decided admiration openly expressed by the young Earl of Dunmore, made her enter heart and soul into the endeavour to secure such a brilliant settlement for her daughter.

Agatha's influences, during the last three years which she had spent entirely with her mother, had not tended to develope her best qualities; and she had, in a great measure, imbibed Mrs. Burton's love of power and admiration. She was dazzled by the chance of becoming a peeress, and lent herself with the greatest willingness to the idea of giving her hand to a man who she

knew in her heart she should always utterly despise.

The Earl of Dunmore was an only son; his father had died when he was quite young, leaving his mother his sole guardian. If there was one fear in the heart of the Countess, it was that he might marry; and his openly expressed admiration for Agatha Burton roused all her maternal jealousies. But the Countess was essentially a woman of the world; she always made a point of cultivating her son's friends, so that whatever was said or done might be done with her knowledge, in order that she might be able to exert a constant counter-influence. So she called on the Burtons, and squeezed Mrs. Burton's hand, and congratulated her on her daughter's beauty, asked them to her large parties, and check-mated them on all possible occasions. To see those two women together, you would have thought that their friendship was most sincere. Each had a game to play, and played it well—Mrs. Burton, to marry Agatha to the Earl; the Countess, to prevent the Earl from marrying Agatha. And to all appearance the Countess was likely to succeed; for although the Earl, who was weak and vacillating to a degree, liked Agatha as much as he was capable of liking any one, he stood still in great awe of his mother. This was perhaps, in a great measure, owing to the fact that, being a sickly boy, he had been sent to neither public schools nor college, so that home-influence had all his life been predominant; and at the age of five-and-twenty, he was in many things as dependent as he had been at fifteen. His appearance was far from prepossessing. Slight and sickly-looking; with small, light-blue eyes; very fair straight hair, which he wore rather long; and a receding chin, that helped to give an expression which at times became almost vacant;—but he was an *Earl*, with 50,000*l.* a year, and the owner of Dunmore Castle; so all London united in worshipping the son of Mammon.

If subsiding into the 'Dowager' became a necessity, the Countess would rather have looked forward

to being supplanted by Lady Alice Wendover, the fourth daughter of the Earl of Carstairs, a pretty, fair-haired girl, over whom Lady Dunmore thought she might exercise unlimited authority, and thus retain her influence with her son; so on all occasions when she invited Agatha to her house, Lady Alice was there also. But although Lady Alice often went down to dinner on the Earl's arm, it was at Agatha's side that he would be found during the remainder of the evening.

When Agatha's brother, Captain Valentine Burton, got leave from Dublin, where his regiment was quartered, and came to visit his mother in Wilton Crescent, he was at once made the confidant of her plans and wishes, and entered into her views with a willingness that was, in a great measure, born of the hope that a large share of the advantages would probably fall to himself. Captain Burton—or Captain Val., as he was generally called by his intimate friends—was certainly very good-looking, and, although selfish to a degree, was a most pleasant companion where he chose to make himself agreeable. He dressed well enough to be considered an authority; belonged to the best Clubs, rode the best horses, made a good book on the Derby, and was said to be desperately in love with a married lady of distinction. In appearance, although he had something of Agatha's haughty expression, he was as unlike her as possible, being much fairer, with eyes that had a shade of green in them, and light-brown hair, whiskers, and moustache. Taking him altogether, Captain Valentine Burton was a man who commanded a certain success, both with men and women: he showed his best points to the world, and was appreciated accordingly.

Mrs. Burton naturally expected that her son would be a powerful ally for the furtherance of Agatha's prospects; and at first it appeared more than likely such would be the case; for Lord Dunmore appeared delighted with his new friend, and sought his society on all possible occasions. But there was

one quality in the Earl's character that was his greatest safeguard; and this was *suspicion*. He was suspicious of every one's motives; and a well-timed hint from the Countess, that Captain Burton was desirous of cultivating him for the sake of his horses or shooting, put him instantly on his guard; so that after a week or two Captain Burton had got very little further than he had done the first few days.

As may naturally be supposed, the constant assurance that Agatha was scheming to marry him for his money and position, carried due weight with Lord Dunmore; but there was another element in the Earl's character that brought him more nearly within reach of Mrs. Burton's toils—and this was vanity. He was vain enough to believe that Agatha really liked and admired him for himself; and nothing could ever shake this belief, although his mother naturally tried to do so in a thousand ways that were not too openly expressed. The Countess had one advantage over Mrs. Burton—she was the Earl's mother, and understood his nature thoroughly, and was in consequence so far successful in her treatment, that the Season had reached its close and he had not been committed. She arranged a hurried visit to the Continent, and persuaded Lord Dunmore into thinking the plan every way delightful. She went with him herself to call on the Burtons, and expressed many hopes that at some future time they might renew their delightful intercourse; and then, with a triumphant expression on her face, she swept back into the family coach, and carried her son away with her.

Agatha had certainly never loved Lord Dunmore; but she had meant to *marry* him, and she felt humiliated. Proud passionate tears rushed to her eyes when Mrs. Burton upbraided her with not having made the most of her opportunities, but she only said—

'You cannot despise me more than I despise myself; not for having failed to secure him, but for ever having tried.' And without another word she left the room,

and, alone in her own particular little sanctum, endured the kind of misery those only can experience who are neither in charity with themselves nor with the world.

Captain Burton, finding that his London home no longer promised to be very agreeable, returned to Dublin; and Mrs. Burton made arrangements to give up the house in Wilton Crescent, and go to Brighton. Agatha hated the idea of Brighton; she longed for rest after all the miserable results of that brilliant London Season—the Season to which she had looked forward with such pleasure, and which she might have enjoyed so much, had not her mother's one aim and object been that she should attract Lord Dunmore,—and for this, what had she not sacrificed?—what had she not endured? She had been almost rude to other men, whom she might really have liked; and she had encouraged by a thousand arts a man she disliked to join her during her rides in the park, and to dance with her at balls. She had asked his advice; sung his favourite songs; accepted his flowers; and given him in return her most winning smiles—and the result had been *utter failure*! At Brighton she would be constantly reminded of all that had passed, and would be pitied or consoled with, as the case might be.

'Mamma,' said Agatha suddenly, one morning at breakfast, 'do you particularly care whether I go to Brighton or not?'

Mrs. Burton looked up. 'Care whether you go to Brighton! why, Agatha, what do you mean?'

'I mean,' she said, 'that I would rather *not* go, at all events for the present—that I should like first to pay my long-promised visit to Mrs. Vernor.'

'I'm sure I don't care,' replied Mrs. Burton pettishly (Agatha had lost a good deal in her mother's estimation since the Earl had not proposed), 'and perhaps it would really be a good thing, we certainly have been living at an enormous expense lately, and I could economise better alone.'

'I thought of that,' said Agatha,

'and Brighton is so like London that I should require to dress nearly as well as I do here; whilst at St. Helens——'

'I should indeed say that anything would do for St. Helens,' replied Mrs. Burton, in a tone of voice which spoke volumes as to the utter nothingness of the place that Agatha proposed visiting; 'but if you really wish it I do not object; you are looking pale and ill-natured; people will say that it is from disappointment, and make all sorts of disagreeable comments, if you are constantly *en evidence*, as you must be in Brighton. Whilst if you go where no one knows you, you can rusticate and get up your good looks.'

Agatha left the table and went to the window: she looked out for a few minutes in utter silence, then she said, 'May I write to day, mamma?'

'As soon as you like,' Mrs. Burton replied, 'and indeed the more quickly our places are settled the better; the heat of London and constant late hours are beginning to disagree dreadfully with me, and I shall be delighted to get away.'

Agatha walked as far as the door, when Mrs. Burton called her back.

'Of course you won't mind doing without a maid; I can't really spare Cameron, and I don't know how to afford two?'

'You need not distress yourself, mamma,' replied Agatha. 'Even if I wanted a maid ever so much, I could not take one to St. Helens; there would be no room for her in a cottage like Mrs. Vernor's.'

'And I am also quite sure that Cameron would not go,' said Mrs. Burton; and then she took up the 'Times,' and Agatha left the room, and went up-stairs to write her letter.

A few days after Wilton Crescent was deserted, and Agatha's new life had begun at St. Helens.

CHAPTER II.

It seemed so strange to Agatha, after all the glare and glitter of London life, to wake in a tiny bed in a tiny room, to get up and smell the *mignonette* and roses in the garden

that ran round Mrs. Vernor's cottage, which had let itself into a sheltered corner of the little bay of St. Helens—to watch the white-crested waves lapping on the golden sands, and to hear the striking of the old church clock of Denborough, a little country town about half a mile over the hill. Yes, it was strange, but how pleasant! Agatha felt another being; all the artifices of her London life seemed to be swept into the past, and her better nature to reassert itself. Happily there was no counter-influence to mar her enjoyment, so she dressed herself in one of her plainest morning dresses, and went lightly down stairs to breakfast.

Mrs. Burton had always been fond of the world, and of moving from place to place, making it inconvenient to have Agatha with her; so she had been placed at an early age under Mrs. Vernor's care, who with more or less assistance from masters had educated her up to the age of seventeen, when Mrs. Burton had taken her abroad. Mrs. Vernor had subsequently come into a moderate legacy, and for the sake of her health, which was delicate, had bought a cottage at the little bay of St. Helens, on the Lancashire coast, in order to be near the sea, which had been particularly recommended. She had often longed to see Agatha again. Feeling for her as she did almost the affection of a parent, the news of her intended visit was a matter of great rejoicing, and she welcomed her very warmly that morning as she opened the door of the little sitting-room.

'Oh!' said Agatha, kissing her, 'is it not all so natural? I feel as if I must get out my books and commence at once with Mangnall's Questions.'

'Instead of which, Agatha,' said Mrs. Vernor, a smile lighting up a pale placid face which bore the traces of departed beauty and the presence of a warm heart and a refined mind, 'you are a grand young lady from London come to cheer me in my old age, and give me glimpses of the *beau monde*.'

Agatha sighed. The glimpses of the *beau monde* she had lived in would not, she suspected, enliven her friend very much. 'I hate Lon-

don,' she said; 'I'm tired to death of gaiety of every description, and my greatest enjoyment here will be the never seeing any one but you;' and Agatha drew her chair to the modest little breakfast-table, and bent her queenly head over a bright patterned cup and saucer.

'What would you say,' replied Mrs. Vernor, 'if I told you that I have an invitation for you already?'

'For me?' said Agatha, looking up.

'It's only to have tea with my old Doctor and his wife, and unless you like we need not accept it.'

But of this Agatha would not hear; she wanted so much to walk into Denborough, and it would be so nice in the cool of the evening, and an early dinner and tea was just what she most enjoyed; so Mrs. Vernor sent a note to say they would come, and then left Agatha to amuse herself while she superintended her household affairs.

Agatha put on her hat and went out to sit on the sands, dreaming away a long morning, and thinking how happy she was to be free to do as she liked—trying to forget that, but three short days ago, every wish of her heart had been centered on one point, that of making a brilliant marriage. At one o'clock she went in to dinner, and the day being very hot neither she nor Mrs. Vernor cared to go out again till it was time for them to walk into Denborough. Agatha dressed herself in a dainty high white muslin, which she thought only fit for the morning in London, and with a black lace shawl and a hat finishing her costume, she went into Mrs. Vernor's room, and announced that she was ready. Agatha looked very beautiful and very elegant, and Mrs. Vernor was almost startled into some expression of admiration as her old pupil stood before her, but refrained, thinking it might be bad for her. Alas! how little she guessed at all the flattery that had been lavished upon Agatha; how little she thought that Agatha's vanity took the form of being perfectly satisfied with herself, and receiving as a right the personal homage she met with wherever she went!

The walk to Denborough was not

more than half a mile, but then it was up hill, so they went very slowly, but they got into the High Street a few minutes before seven. There really was only that one street of any importance; minor thoroughfares all ran towards this centre. It was like most streets in country towns, long and irregularly built, with a market-place at the top, and shops and private houses alternately on either side. Dr. Lynn's house was made conspicuous by being built in red brick, and having three steps at the front door and a brass plate on it announcing the fact of his occupation. Mrs. Lynn was at home, the maid said, and they were shown into a room just across the stone hall. It was not exactly a dining-room nor a drawing-room, but a room that had the air of being a general sitting-room; a room that Mrs. Lynn always called the parlour, and which they generally used for all purposes except on great occasions, when the real drawing-room was undressed and made to look as comfortable as its formal nature would allow; but as all Mrs. Lynn's friends stood by the 'parlour,' and as they seldom entertained strangers, the drawing-room was quite a spectral uninhabited appendage.

As Agatha and Mrs. Vernor were announced, Mrs. Lynn got up from an easy-chair to receive them, laying down a bundle of knitting over which she appeared to be busily employed. She was a kind-hearted, comfortable-looking old lady, dressed in a plain black silk of a fashion of many years ago, with snow white curls under a cap that had also a good deal of white about it. She helped Agatha to take off her shawl, and gave her a warm welcome to Denborough, desiring the servant to let Dr. Lynn know that their visitors had arrived.

When Dr. Lynn came in, Agatha felt at once that she should like him. He was tall and slight, with a clever, benevolent face, and his manner was especially winning. His dress, like Mrs. Lynn's, had not changed with the changing times; his coat was ornamented with gilt buttons, and his shirt front was

adorned with frills of spotless white. All Denborough united in their love and respect for Dr. Lynn, and the good he did none knew until he had gone himself to a land where his works would follow him. He was as cordial as Mrs. Lynn had been in his welcome to Agatha, and then they sat down to tea—a real old-fashioned substantial tea, with a hissing urn, and plenty to eat and drink lay spread out before them down the long table. Mrs. Vernor glanced at a vacant chair.

‘Oh!’ said Mrs. Lynn, ‘I have a pleasant surprise for you—my son is at home: he only came this morning quite unexpectedly, and he has been detained with a gentleman on business, but he will be here in a few minutes.’

This intelligence caused quite a little flutter of surprise, and Agatha found herself listening with something like impatience to long discussions amongst the three friends on Mrs. Lynn’s past and future, a conversation that was only interrupted by the entrance of the young man himself. He shook hands very warmly with Mrs. Vernor, bowed to Agatha, and took the vacant chair just opposite to where she was sitting. Agatha felt somehow that she was agreeably surprised; she had always believed it impossible that a young man in a country town could be so bearable, but Mr. Lynn was unquestionably a gentleman. He looked about twenty-five, was tall and well made, with a broad chest and shoulders; he had his mother’s wide forehead and grey eyes, and a certain firmness about the mouth and chin that belonged to his father, but the rest of his face was unlike either. His hair was of a light shade of brown, with a strong tendency to curl, and his expression was so bright at times that you were hardly prepared for the sudden change. When anything vexed him, a stern, mournful look seemed to alter its whole character, and fascinated you with a thousand speculations, so that long before tea was over he had interested Agatha, that first most dangerous stage.

Agatha was a true woman, with

all a woman’s love of power, and she made up her mind that Mr. Lynn should like her. That the game might in any way be equal she never realized; he was to like her, whilst she was to remain indifferent, and he would make a charming addition to the little society at the cottage at St. Helens. As soon as tea was over, Mrs. Lynn proposed that Agatha should see the garden, and Mr. Lynn offered to lionize its beauties. The Doctor went to his particular room combining study and surgery, and Mrs. Lynn and Mrs. Vernor prepared for a chat; so Agatha accepted the invitation, put her lace shawl over her shoulders, and went out at the open window. The garden was one of those that you often see at the back of town houses, long and rather formal; but in consequence of a good deal of care having been bestowed upon it, it was a very pleasant spot, with shady trees and narrow winding paths. They walked on in silence, Agatha and Mr. Lynn, till they reached the end of the garden, and then they paused, as Agatha expressed her surprise at finding that it overlooked the edge of the river.

‘I like it so much,’ she said, leaning against a mossy bank, at the side of which some steps were cut down to the water’s edge, where a little boat was moored.

‘I am very fond of it also,’ replied Mr. Lynn; ‘but I fancied that it was because all my early life had been associated with it.’

Agatha looked down on the dark river swiftly flowing by them on to the wooden bridge, and above that, standing out high and clear against the evening sky, the old Denborough Church.

‘Of course you may like it from knowing it, but even strangers must think it beautiful.’

‘It was a much more important place once,’ he said; ‘that old wall belonged to the monastery, and they say the church then called itself Cathedral, but not in my time.’

Agatha laughed. ‘You have lived here all your life?’

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘and am likely to continue doing so.’

'As a doctor?' Agatha asked, but rather timidly; for there was something about Mr. Lynn that awed her.

'No,' he replied. 'My father wanted me to follow his profession, but I have no taste for surgery, so I have been studying the law; and ultimately I hope to get sufficient practice in Denborough to enable me to remain here.'

Agatha looked at her companion, and secretly wondered that living in Denborough could be the height of his ambition. How different he was to the London men she had been in the habit of meeting: he had none of their indolent polish, but a look of almost hard work about his face and figure; still it did not deteriorate from his attractions, and she found herself listening to his account of his early life, spent more or less alone in that old garden, and on that dark river, with immense interest.

Agatha was quite a new element in Mr. Lynn's life; if she had fallen from the clouds he could not have been more surprised. She seemed a being of another world as she sat on the bank in her white dress, with her large dark eyes looking intently up at him. Of course there were young ladies in Denborough, but how different to Agatha! Her style of beauty distinguished her at once from all the women he had hitherto met. If Mr. Lynn had been a painter he would have liked to paint her then and there, and to have immortalized on canvas the beautiful Grecian features of his new Divinity; but as it was, they only sat and chatted on indifferent subjects till the moon came out from the back of the old church, and bright stars found their reflection in the dark water of the river. Then Agatha got up and proposed going in doors, so they went slowly back by the winding paths and in again at the open window.

The Doctor and his wife kept early hours, so that the rest of the evening was soon over. A supper-tray was the finale, after which they put on their cloaks and prepared for the walk home. Mr. Lynn offered to escort them, and the offer was ac-

cepted. As the way was all down-hill, their walk was soon over, and Mr. Lynn wished them good-bye at the garden gate, with a promise to bring Mrs. Vernor some flower-roots so soon as he could find spare time to do so. Somehow or another Mr. Lynn found the spare time very quickly, and he brought so many plants that he and Agatha had quite a long afternoon's work in planting them; so of course he stayed to tea, and then they all walked on the sands until the church clock had chimed the quarter to ten.

Of course so remarkably handsome a girl as Agatha Burton, with her simple but elegant London toilette, and her patrician air, did not fail to create quite a sensation when she went into the old Denborough church. There was only one person in the whole congregation that Agatha cared in the least to attract, and that was Mr. Lynn; but although Mr. Lynn came constantly to the cottage, and sought her society on all occasions, Agatha felt very uncertain of success. Mr. Lynn did not pay her the kind of devotion she had hitherto received, and the wish that he should like her became greater in proportion as the doubt increased; until at length Agatha ended as so many have done before her,—in trying to make Mr. Lynn fall in love with her, she fell in love with him herself. Not that Agatha was by any means aware of this, and it was almost insensibly that she deferred to his opinions, read the books he recommended, and felt a humiliating dependence upon his approbation, upon whether he came or stayed away, and a thousand other trifles that make up the sum of love.

CHAPTER III.

Five or six weeks glided on, and Agatha had become quite at home in High Street. She would sit on a low stool at Mrs. Lynn's feet, and pick up lost stitches in the square of knitting that was destined for a counterpane for the spare-room bed. Even the Doctor's sanctum was open for her to come and go as she liked, and often after tea Mr. Lynn would take her out in the little boat on the

river, and point out the different spots where as a boy he had spent hours with his fishing-rod or books. Agatha enjoyed these evenings immensely; but everything has an end, and generally the most unpleasant things come most unexpectedly.

It had been a very hot August day, and Mrs. Vernor was confined to her bed by a bad nervous headache. Agatha was sitting under the only tree in the garden, on a rustic wooden bench, which Mr. Lynn had taken great pains to erect a few days before. She was hoping he himself might come, when the gate opened and he walked in.

'I am so glad to see you,' said Agatha; 'I was getting positively dull in spite of the new book.'

Mr. Lynn held up a tiny note. 'My mother has sent me with this.' Agatha put out her hand to take it, but he raised it out of her reach.

'It is for Mrs. Vernor, but I can tell you its contents.'

'I can guess,' said Agatha; 'it is to go to tea—and I accept.'

Mr. Lynn sat down. 'And Mrs. Vernor?'

'I forgot,' exclaimed Agatha. 'Mrs. Vernor will not, I fear, be well enough to go, she has one of her bad nervous headaches.'

'But she will be better I dare say by to-morrow.'

'Oh!' said Agatha, in a tone that had a shade of disappointment in it, 'I thought it was for to-night.'

'To-night I could not have been at home, and I had the vanity to flatter myself that I might be missed.'

Agatha looked up; Mr. Lynn was looking at her, and something in his expression and the low tones of his voice made the colour come to her cheeks. Neither of them spoke for some time, then Agatha proposed that he should read to her, as he generally did whenever he came to the cottage. Mr. Lynn acquiesced at once, but suggested an adjournment to the shady sand-bank which was by the sea-shore; so there they went, and Agatha took out her work, and Mr. Lynn read, in a rich deep voice, Tennyson's 'Locksley Hall.'

Perhaps Agatha had never felt so

happy as she did that afternoon. We all of us are more or less the victims of circumstances, and he loved her before he discovered a flaw in his idol; and even afterwards, when he saw her as she really was, under the influence of the world's verdict, he loved her still.

How little they thought that August afternoon how long it would be before they were destined again to see the sun sink over that calm broad sea, or watch the little fishing boats dotted far and wide against the horizon; how little Agatha expected to see her brother when, looking up quite suddenly, Captain Valentine Burton was standing before her.

'You are surprised to see me, Agatha,' he said, in the same tone that he would have used had they only parted that morning. Agatha was surprised, but she made a desperate effort not to look embarrassed, and after returning his salutation, introduced Mr. Lynn. The two young men bowed, and then Captain Burton continued, 'I found that Mrs. Vernor was in bed, so that, being debarred from the pleasure of seeing her, I came in search of you.'

Agatha tried to appear glad to see him, but she really felt that the constraint was painful; so she got up, took her brother's offered arm, and suggested their return to the house. At the gate Mr. Lynn wished them good-bye. Agatha longed to say something about the invitation, or send some message to his mother, but Captain Valentine was looking on; so she only gave her hand and asked him if he would not come in. Mr. Lynn declined, and then she followed her brother into the house. After Captain Burton had satisfied his inner man with some needful refreshment, Agatha proposed that they should go out of doors, the evening being intensely hot and the room small. Captain Burton readily acquiescing they strolled into the garden, and sat down on the wooden bench under the tree—the tree that had seemed so different to Agatha a few hours ago. Captain Valentine took out a cigar-case, lit a cigar, and said in a tone of voice that lingered on the borders of a sneer,—

'Might I venture to inquire who is the new victim on whom you are now exercising your *Vere de Vere* talents?'

An angry light flashed from Agatha's eyes, but she said coldly,

'If it is any gratification to you, you may—he is a friend of Mrs. Vernor.'

'I should have said of yours,' replied Captain Burton, with an intonation that annoyed Agatha, more than she cared to own even to herself.

'Yes, he is a friend of mine also; his father is a doctor in Denborough.' She tried to say it indifferently, but she felt vexed by conjecturing what her brother would think.

'I must congratulate you, Agatha, on having such distinguished friends.'

'What you choose to think or say of my friends must always be a matter of perfect indifference to me,' said Agatha.

'It may be,' replied her brother, removing his cigar, and lightly knocking off the ashes from the end with his little finger, 'but how about the Earl?'

The hot blood rushed into Agatha's cheeks.

'I should be obliged to you never to mention his name to me again.'

'I am afraid that your request is impossible, as it is entirely on Lord Dunmore's account that I am now sitting beside my fair sister on this very uncomfortable bench.'

'On Lord Dunmore's account?'

'Yes, Lord Dunmore is at Brighton.'

'I cannot see,' said Agatha, 'how Lord Dunmore's movements can in any way affect mine.'

'My mother has sent me to fetch you home.'

Agatha looked up amazed. 'Back to Brighton?'

'Yes, back to Brighton.'

'I shan't go,' said Agatha, decisively.

'Nonsense, Agatha,' replied her brother, in a tone that was half conciliating; 'the Earl has been asking for you, and my mother said she was expecting your return in two or three days at the latest, and so

he is remaining on purpose to see you.'

'I thought,' she said, 'he had gone abroad.'

'And so he had, but he has somehow managed to elude his lady mother, and if you ever had a chance of securing the prize, you have it now.'

'Oh, Val,' said Agatha, passionately, 'if you only knew how hateful all this is to me, you would spare me; you would help me to escape the humiliation of trying to marry a man I never could love, in exchange for the doubtful happiness of securing a grand worldly position.'

But Captain Valentine Burton was not in the least persuaded into countenancing what he thought a romantic absurdity; besides which he was really anxious for Agatha's marriage with Lord Dunmore, as being likely to advance a little affair of his own. Captain Burton was not in love, but he was in debt, and this made him extremely anxious to secure the hand and fortune of a certain beautiful Miss Chatterton, who he had met in Dublin; and he believed that a powerful brother-in-law would promote his interests with her friends, when he might otherwise fail. So he told Agatha that it was a case in which he could not interfere, but that having been sent for her all the way into Lancashire, he should really be afraid of the consequences if she refused to return with him: so after a good deal more persuasion, Agatha was obliged to consent, as there seemed no chance of escape, and it was arranged that they should leave St. Helens in a couple of days, Captain Valentine congratulating himself on having obtained a victory, which at the commencement seemed likely to give him some trouble.

The next morning at breakfast, much to Agatha's relief, Captain Burton announced his intention of going out for the day, as he had some friends in the neighbourhood whom he had promised to visit should he ever come into that part of the world. Mrs. Vernor tried to persuade him to join them at Dr. Lynn's in the evening, but this he declined, saying that he should be

home too late, and to Agatha that, however she might reconcile herself to drink tea in the middle of the day with old women and doctors in a poky country town, he certainly had hitherto failed to cultivate his tastes in so exalted a direction.

Agatha never knew how that last evening went; she knew that she expected Mr. Lynn all day, and that he never came, and just after their arrival in High Street it began to rain in torrents, so that going out into the garden was impossible, and the conversation was general. The greatest surprise and sorrow was expressed at Agatha's sudden and unexpected departure by the Doctor and his wife, whilst Mr. Lynn was gloomy, silent, and abstracted. It was not until they were going away that he and Agatha had even a moment's opportunity of speaking to each other in private.

She had hoped all the evening that the rain would cease, and that they might walk home, but this turned out to be impossible; so a fly was ordered, and it was arranged that they should drive. Mr. Lynn had followed Agatha into the hall to find her cloak and hat, which she had left upon the table. What he said Agatha could never clearly recall, but she went to bed that night with a dreamy impression that he loved her, and that he had asked her to remember and to trust him; that he had said some passionate words about the future; that his *last* look at her had been one of unutterable tenderness; and that the lingering pressure of his hand had been unreprieved by her; and she felt as she closed her eyes that she could bear the future better now that she knew **HE** cared for her. She thought it was only her vanity that was gratified, and not until she saw Mr. Lynn again did she realize how much those who love suffer in comparison with those who do not.

On Agatha's arrival in Brighton, Mrs. Burton was charmed with her improved personal appearance.

'Really, Agatha,' she said, 'going to St. Helens was quite the best thing you could have done, and, after all, you have not lost much of Lord Dunmore's society. He came

this morning to ask when I expected you, and we are to meet him on the Parade this evening: but only guess who else is here.'

Agatha shook her head.

'Lady Alice Wendover; and her aunt, Lady Monckton, is trying all she can to secure the Earl. I consider it,' said Mrs. Burton, with rising indignation, 'forward to a degree, the way those people run after that man, and I'm sure Lady Alice came here on purpose.'

'Is Lord Dunmore making any long stay?' said Agatha.

'I fancy, Agatha,' said her mother, playfully, 'that will depend very much upon you, and how you play your cards. He has left his mother in Paris, and is supposed to be gone to the Highlands for shooting.'

Agatha felt a far greater antipathy for Lord Dunmore now than she had ever done in London, but she also felt at the same time that any remonstrance on her part would be useless; so she only shook her head, and hinted that Lady Alice had been as great, if not a greater, favourite than herself.

Mrs. Burton would not for a moment admit this, and insisted on going over with Agatha their plans for the ensuing week; so the end of it all was that in a few days Agatha was plunged into such a round of gaiety, that the better influence, nay, almost the remembrance, of peaceful, happy St. Helens was lost to her.

Lord Dunmore's attentions certainly became more decided than they had ever been in London; still there were moments when Mrs. Burton felt most painfully that, after all, he might propose to Lady Alice instead, and she urged Agatha to outshine her rival as much as it was possible. If beauty could have done anything towards attracting Lord Dunmore, Mrs. Burton felt sure that no comparison could ever arise between Lady Alice and Agatha, but it was Agatha herself that she doubted. Sometimes, when the Earl was endeavouring to make himself most agreeable, Agatha would be silent and abstracted, and Mrs. Burton's sufferings would be all the greater, as she feared that any direct interference on her part might only

act as an impetus in the wrong direction to ruin the whole thing.

'Lady Alice's style of beauty,' Mrs. Burton would say to her son, Captain Valentine, in their many private conferences, 'is, I am certain, far less attractive to a fair man like Lord Dunmore than such a style as Agatha's; but really I hardly know how to account for his dividing his attentions as he does, and it must be Agatha's own fault.'

'It seems to me,' said the Captain, 'to be going fairly enough.'

Mrs. Burton sighed. 'You see,' she said, with an air of contemplation, 'although he drives Agatha out one day, he takes Lady Alice the next; I must own it is very provoking.'

'Well, but he calls every day, and sends flowers, and joins us in our rides.'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Burton, 'he does all that, and perhaps I'm foolish, but my heart is so set upon this match that very likely I am inclined to look upon the dark side of things; and if it should happen that his mother came here before he proposed, I feel sure it would be all up.'

But Mrs. Burton's fears were not destined to be realized. If Agatha had been left to herself, the chances are that she would have continued true to the instincts of her better nature; but as it was, a few well-timed hints from her mother that the world would say that she had tried to marry Lord Dunmore and failed, joined to a great deal of gratified vanity, and an innate love of power, made her rush, regardless of everything else, into an abyss, the misery of which she had never seriously contemplated. Agatha was roused at last by emulation, by a thousand other reasons, into endeavouring to bring Lord Dunmore to her feet, and she succeeded. By degrees he went less and less to see Lady Alice, and at all hours a high-stepping horse, held by a tiny tiger, both appertaining to Lord Dunmore's plain dark cabriolet, were to be seen in front of Mrs. Burton's door.

Agatha spared no pains with her dress, and she always looked radiant and beautiful. Lord Dunmore, like

most shallow, weak men, was intensely egotistical; but Agatha bore with exquisite patience long accounts of what he had done and said, and what he meant to do and say, until he left her each day feeling more and more convinced that he was, in her opinion at least, a man of profound judgment and keen perception, and he liked her the better in proportion as she made him more satisfied with himself. He seriously began to think of proposing, but he was not courageous; and his mother, although not present, still influenced him, supposing that Agatha wanted his money, or was dazzled by his position. A cold perspiration would break out all over him, and his distrust would be so great that it took hours of her society to soothe him back to his former state. Perhaps, after all, Lord Dunmore would never have brought himself to the point had he not done so under the influence of excitement. Invitations had been issued for a ball which was to be given by some especial friends of Lady Monckton, and both Agatha and the Earl were invited. On such an occasion, Mrs. Burton decided that a new dress was imperative, and a justifiable expense, so an order was sent to Madame Elise to exercise her taste *ad libitum*, and when Agatha was dressed for the ball, in her flowing skirts of white crape, trimmed with bouquets of blush roses, and a couronne of blush roses in her hair, both Cameron and Mrs. Burton, who had presided over her toilette, were obliged to own that the effect surpassed their warmest expectations; and Agatha herself, felt as she looked in her glass, that her mother's praises were not excessive.

Success seemed to await Agatha on all points on that memorable evening. The Earl was waiting for them at the ball-room door, and engaged Agatha for all the dances she was willing to give him. Her appearance produced quite a murmur of admiration, and Lady Alice was looking her worst. Mrs. Burton took a seat next Lady Monckton, Captain Valentine established himself in the doorway, and leaning on

Lord Dunmore's arm, Agatha took her place in the first quadrille.

It was towards the end of the evening that Agatha's success became complete. She had been waltzing with Lord Dunmore, and after the dance was over he had taken her into one of the side conservatories, and there and then laid his earldom at her feet, and Agatha had said the fatal Yes.

They returned to the dancing room, she leaning on the arm of her future lord, her cheeks were flushed and a triumphant light shone in her eyes. 'I am an earl's affianced wife and a peeress,' she said to herself as she saw her beautiful reflection in the large mirrors that, festooned by coloured draperies, adorned the walls; and, the envied of all London, she forgot even the man by whose agency all this was to become her own. She remembered only her triumph. She bent her stately head over a bouquet of rare exotics that Lord Dunmore had sent her just as she was leaving home, and the Earl leaned over her to whisper something in her ear. She looked up suddenly, and the bouquet of flowers dropped from her hand—standing in the doorway, gazing at her with a look of mournful intentness in his dark grey eyes, was Mr. Lynn.

CHAPTER IV.

Lord Dunmore stooped to pick up the flowers, but his eye followed the direction of Agatha's. The colour had fled from her cheeks, leaving them of marble whiteness.

'I do not feel well,' she said faintly; 'take me where I can get some water.' Lord Dunmore hurried her into a side room, and placing her in a chair, went in search of a glass of water. Agatha pressed her hand against her heart; that was the first moment she had realized that she loved Mr. Lynn, and then it was too late. She felt that come what might she must see him, and she waited impatiently for Lord Dunmore's return. She drank the water, said hurriedly that she felt well again, and urged him to take her back to the ball-room. Lord Dunmore's suspicions were aroused in their first hour of

their engagement, and it was not the least trial that Agatha had to bear. Mr. Lynn was nowhere to be seen. Agatha felt sure that he had not been into the dancing room: then why had he come at all? She was feverish and excited; the fear of appearing *distracted* made her try to exert herself to appear at least as gay and brilliant as she had been before, and so that evening, which had begun for her in so different a spirit, dragged wearily to an end.

She went down to the carriage on Lord Dunmore's arm, and he put her in as if she were already his peculiar property, and muttered something about seeing her in the morning. The door closed, the horses turned in the direction of home, and Agatha sank back with a heavy sigh of relief.

Captain Burton was not with them, and neither Agatha nor Mrs. Burton spoke a word. Agatha felt too miserable, and Mrs. Burton was desirous not to seem anxious to propose a question, the answer to which she felt sure would be all she could wish. When they reached their own house Agatha and Mrs. Burton went straight up-stairs, but at the drawing-room door Agatha paused suddenly, turned the handle, and beckoning to her mother to follow, went in.

Although the grey morning light was breaking, Agatha held the lighted candle she had taken from the hall table in her hand, and somehow it gave her a spectral appearance; her face was almost as white as the dress she wore, and there was a look of despair in her large dark eyes. Neither spoke for a minute. Mrs. Burton sat down in a large arm-chair, but Agatha remained standing with the light still in her hand. At last she looked up and said suddenly, 'Mamma, I am engaged.'

Mrs. Burton started up. 'Oh! my darling child, how happy you have made me,' she exclaimed; and she would have given her one of those embraces which she had bestowed so sparingly on her child all through her life, as she poured forth her congratulations, but Agatha waved her off.

'You need not congratulate me,'

she said. 'I have promised to marry Lord Dunmore, but I wish I were dead a thousand times rather than look forward to living as his wife. You have urged me to it; you and Valentine have tried a thousand means to make me the miserable woman I am to-night,' and Agatha put down the candle, threw herself on her knees beside the table, and burst into a passion of tears.

Mrs. Burton was almost alarmed, Agatha so seldom gave way, and something like remorse mingled with her other feelings as she saw how much she was suffering; but still the idea of allowing her to give up Lord Dunmore never crossed her mind. She thought it best to leave Agatha to herself, so she waited until the sobs had died away into a low wailing moan, and then she tried to soothe her, and urged her to go up to bed and get some rest, assuring her that things would not look in the least the same in the morning.

Agatha obeyed; she went up-stairs with a weary, heavy step, and refused to avail herself of Cameron's assistance beyond unfastening her dress; she only wanted to be alone. She looked at her pale miserable face in the same mirror that a few hours ago had reflected her in all the triumph of her beauty, and then she crept into bed.

Is there any one who has suffered who does not know the agony of sleep when there is some great mental pressure? When Agatha lost consciousness it was only for a few minutes, and then again she would be wide awake, going over in minute detail all she had said and done, with the music ringing in her ears, the brilliant dresses of the dancers passing to and fro, and herself haunted everywhere she went by Mr. Lynn's mournful eyes. When at last she did fall asleep, her sleep was so heavy that, on starting up in bed, she could not remember what had happened. She pressed her hands upon her head, but her eyes fell upon a bouquet of faded flowers, and all rushed back upon her brain with horrible distinctness. It was still only about six o'clock, but she got up, dressed hurriedly, put on a

cloak and hat, and went out. It was a glorious morning, and as she breathed the fresh air her spirits revived. She walked slowly in the direction of the West Cliff. It was yet too early for any one to be about, except a few busy workpeople, so that she was absolutely startled by hearing her own name. She turned quickly round, and met Mr. Lynn face to face.

He seized her hand. 'Agatha,' he said passionately, 'let me call you Agatha, if it be only for once. I came to Brighton on purpose to see you. I could not believe it from other lips. Is it true? are you engaged to Lord Dunmore?'

He was looking at her so eagerly, so intently, that there was no escape, and with a bowed head she answered him, 'Yes, it is true, too true.' Mr. Lynn flung her hand away rather than dropped it.

'You thought,' he said, 'because you had no heart yourself, that I had none. Did you trifle with all the best feelings of my nature to amuse yourself, forgetting that you might make all my future life blank and desolate?'

'Oh!' said Agatha entreatingly, 'I am so miserable; I never meant it—you are unkind, unjust.'

'Of course I am unjust, Miss Burton, more than unjust. It was madness, presumption, folly, whatever you please to call it; but I have learnt my lesson, and I shall never make the same mistake again.'

Agatha's lips trembled so that she could not speak, but Mr. Lynn was merciless as he went on bitterly—

'We shall probably never meet again; society draws a wide line between the man you are going to marry and the man whose prospects you have blighted; but I can still wish you happiness. You have been false, not to your words perhaps, but to your actions—may God forgive you, Agatha, as I do!'

'Mr. Lynn,' said Agatha, but the words were so faint they did not reach him, he had already turned—she held out her arms in her despair, but he did not see her; he did not once look back, but went on swiftly, and turning a corner disappeared behind the cliff, and Agatha was alone.

(To be continued.)

BOOKS OF THE SEASON.

LIVINGSTONE'S TRAVELS—BAKER'S EXPLORATIONS OF THE NILE SOURCES—RENNIE'S BHOTAN—BERTRAM'S HARVEST OF THE SEA—HISTORY OF PAINTING IN ITALY—SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS—BOOKS OF POEMS—CAPT. GRONOW'S LAST RECOLLECTIONS—GRANTLEY BERKELEY'S LIFE AND RECOLLECTIONS—LORD WILLIAM LENNOX'S REMINISCENCES—THE WINDHAM DIARY—MEMOIR OF LORD COMBERMERE—FRENCH BOOKS—THE FRENCH EMPEROR'S JULES CÉSAR—RENAN'S LES APÔTRES—AND VICTOR HUGO'S TRAVAILLEURS DE LA MER.

THE books of the season are as much a part of the season as the operas or the Royal Academy. It is true that they are not so exactly defined within limitations of time and subject, but there is a great deal more method about the production of books than might be supposed; there is a certain order and rule of procedure, although, appealing to all varieties of minds and interests, they are with difficulty grouped and classified. The book season begins earlier and ends later than the ordinary season, and the best time of the season is hardly the best time for books. And yet what would the season be if it were not for books and the discussion of books? Beyond this there are certain books which are especially books of the season; which spring from the season, belong to it, and are nothing without it. Now we propose in this paper to chat a little about books which people have been chatting a great deal about during the season, and in addition we shall examine the peculiar literary phenomena of what in a narrower sense are books of the season.

It is about Christmas, or a little before, that the first shower of books alights, numerous as the snow-flakes. As a rule this does not consist of the lightest of light literature, easily read and speedily forgotten. That gay efflorescence comes out with the blooms and blossoms of the spring and early summer. The books which will be reviewed, quoted, criticised, sensationalized, come out before the commencement of the parliamentary session. You may be sure that there is a reason for this. Publishers of books are astute people who make their publications after long acquaintance with the ways of the world. They select for their big books and their important ventures the only time of the year in which busy people have much time to attend to anything that demands

much intellectual exertion. In the season itself people are too busily and agreeably occupied to study. After the season they are too tired to do much except to turn over the leaves of 'London Society' to the sweet music of the summer waves. But to come into the library on a winter morning, when the snow is lying deep on the lawn, and the winds are shrilly screaming through the grove—this hot weather the very recollection is cool and delightful—most pleasant it is, the 'Times' being glanced at and put away, to open up that noble parcel which has come down from Mr. Murray's, or the less ambitious quota from some less distinguished bibliopole. The ladies dive into the pages of the thickest books, and qualify themselves for an examination of their contents. The days are passed when it is enough for clever girls to lisp Tennyson and to talk about the characters in the last new novel. They will read for themselves and think for themselves, and the young woman who will not be in the least degree suspected of being *blue*, who plays croquet and rides to hounds, and knows all Gounod's music, will also spend some stiff hours in the morning in mastering literature not better known and appreciated by 'countrymen and lovers.'

I remember meeting Dr. Livingstone at one of Lady F——'s charming dinners last autumn. It was just before his book came out, and just before he himself went off to Bombay on his route to attempt the east coast of Africa. I especially recall it, as I put down the book on the very first of the '65-'66 season, and because I thought the Doctor himself so very much more amusing than his voluminous publication. And yet that book is very well worth reading. There are some books which ought to be read carefully; when people should not be

content with the account in the 'Athenæum,' which almost anticipates the publication of the book, and the laboured reviews in the Quarterlies, which appear when the book itself is well-nigh forgotten. There is a certain art, which can be cultivated until it attains a marvellous delicacy and precision, whereby a man in the course of a couple of pages or a couple of minutes can obtain a very fair notion of the nature of a book. The point which I insist on is this, that if a book is a good book, it is worth while doing it thoroughly, and leaving other books alone. I know so many clever people who try and make intellect their speciality, who have never the moral courage to say of a subject that they don't understand it, or of a book that they have not seen it. Dr. Livingstone's is a good book, inasmuch as *bonâ fide* he has a great deal to tell us. This is the general difference between his books and those of that other African traveller, Captain Burton. Mr. Burton has left off writing for posterity, and now only writes for the season. He has found out that his writings possess a certain conventional value, and so he goes on producing them, but in every case with a marked deterioration in their value. Dr. Livingstone writes in a cumbrous way; his hard, unpliant style very much resembles his own broken English; but there is real substance in what he says. One great difference between Burton and Livingstone is, that Burton advocates Mahomedanism and Livingstone advocates Christianity as the great panacea for the evils of Africa. The wholesome airs of faith, hope, and love pervade Dr. Livingstone's work, but there is a thoroughly unhealthy, miasmatic atmosphere about Mr. Burton's. The only thing which we really regard in Livingstone's work is his depreciation of Bishop Tozer's conduct to the Oxford and Cambridge mission. If his criticisms are substantially true, it will not be too late for Dr. Tozer and his friends to alter their line of conduct in accordance with it. Dr. Livingstone points out what is the true answer to Mr. John Stuart Mill, and whoever else endorses the philosophy

of Malthus, that there are immense tracts of lands enjoying a temperate climate and overflowing with beauty and abundance, which for many centuries will amply provide for the overflowings of the populations of Europe. But the ordinary reader will like Dr. Livingstone's book, not so much for its political economy as for that genuine exploring spirit, that love of enterprise and adventure, that remarkable personal experience which are always freshly cropping up beneath the geographical science and the missionary statistics.

But the great work complementary of Dr. Livingstone's will be Mr. Baker on the 'Albert Nyanza, Great Basin of the Nile, and Explorations of the Nile Sources.' Mr. Baker's new work has been published so very recently that it is difficult to form an exact estimate of its precise value. The geographical value of his exploits can hardly be underrated, although on many points our information is still very incomplete; and it must still be many years before the great enigma of geography is quite cleared up. Speke and Grant had discovered the Victoria N'yanza, and had been informed that another great lake lay to the west. It was Mr. Baker's anxious desire to discover that 'great reservoir of equatorial waters,' and although the natives told him that it was six months' journey, and although difficulties sufficient to daunt the highest courage stared him in the face, he gained a height from which he looked down upon the wide waters of the lake with its mountainous western shores still unexplored. Here he found the point of outlet for the White Nile, which pursues its unchecked career into the Mediterranean. The work has the advantage of possessing a heroine, in the heroic young wife of the explorer, who proves a true helpmeet for her husband in the terrific emergencies which arose, and who very nearly fell a victim to the sun-stroke and the rank vegetation. How she was carried about insensible from place to place; how her forest grave was dug; how her husband refused to give up hope when all seemed hopeless; how she eventually crowned the happiness of the

expedition by her recovery is the most affecting part of a narrative where the intense human interest is kept up unflaggingly. The year's detention in the Kamrasi country alone affords a rare experience, and would alone furnish materials for an interesting work. Mr. Baker holds that the institution of slavery is 'indigenous to the soil of Africa, and that it has not been taught to the African by the white man, as is currently reported, but that it has ever been the peculiar characteristic of the African tribes.'

Other books of travel issued by Mr. Murray are those by Dr. Rennie, an able and intelligent staff medical officer. One of these is essentially a book of the season, using the expression in its less favourable sense, I mean the one about 'Bhotan.' It will be recollected that in the early part of the season people were talking a great deal about Bhotan. It was generally expected that we were in for what would prove a very long and expensive war. The Honourable Ashley Eden, whose name is so peculiarly known in social circles at Calcutta, did what was exceedingly imprudent for any civilian to undertake, in attempting a political mission into the heart of the Bhotanese territory. I imagine that Indian authorities are now pretty well agreed that such a mission would best be left to some military man supported by a tolerably decent military force. It will be remembered how the native fiends of the Bhotan council board pulled the Honourable Ashley Eden's whiskers and daubed the Honourable Ashley Eden's face, operations equally painful and dishonourable, and so offered to a diplomatist what constituted as fair a *casus belli* as any diplomatist might desire. Troops were sent beyond the frontier, and for a time they achieved the kind of traditional success which is always associated with the encounters of British troops against Oriental races. But there came a break in the stereotyped narrative. Not to put too fine a point on it, the British troops were surprised, repulsed, defeated. Two English guns were thrown down a ravine with the expressed object of saving them from the enemy's hands,

but with the specific effect that then they did fall into the enemy's hands. On these two guns the fate of matters subsequently hinges. Dr. Rennie found himself in medical charge of a detachment of the 80th regiment, and in that capacity he marched up several hills and marched down several hills, but performed nothing worthy of fame during these operations. He was, in fact, sent homewards before the British preparations for war were made on such a scale that the Bhotanese were driven to desire peace. The two guns were the obstacle. The Bhotanese declared that the two guns were not to be found. Just as the British public had made up their public mind that, after all, it was hardly perhaps worth while to go to war on account of the guns, the Bhotanese made up their minds in exactly the same direction, and accordingly gave up the guns about which they had so freely lied. Dr. Rennie, however, had seen enough of Bhotan to justify him in writing a book about it, as books are now written. If the war had gone on the book would have been a book of the season; but as the war has collapsed, we do not feel much interest about Bhotan until the war breaks out again. When that event—probably not far distant—takes place, we shall again take down Dr. Rennie's book from the shelf. About one half of it is made up from public documents, and betrays the mustiness of old newspapers; but the Doctor enlivens this department by keeping up a running fire on the proceedings of the Honourable Ashley Eden; and as Mr. Eden has held up one Tongso Penlow as the very villain and vulture of Bhotan, Dr. Rennie naturally devotes his attention to whitewashing and 'rehabilitating' him, and presenting him in the aspect of an agreeable and merry-hearted old gentleman.

A certain faculty of close, accurate observation, and a vein of homely good sense throughout distinguish Dr. Rennie's Journals. He was for some time attached to the embassy at Peking, and when the Embassy people thought it fully worth while that some one should keep a journal of events that were happening during the residence of the first European

diplomatists who had ever resided at Peking, it transpired that Dr. Rennie had already commenced such a journal, and made some progress. There is, however, on the very threshold, a serious objection to be taken. Dr. Rennie is manifestly afraid that his insular prejudices might cause him to represent the Chinese altogether *en laid*, and so he has fallen into the error of representing them altogether *en bon*. At present we have not 'done China,' and are waiting till Mr. Cooke gets up a cheap excursion there and back in the summer. But in the mean time we take the representations of the people who know the countries, and who say that a very hideous and dirty picture of the Chinese has to be drawn, and that Dr. Rennie has given us nothing but the remotest glimpses of the dreadful realities of things. It is also to be said that Dr. Rennie has not so much given us a good book as the materials out of which a good book might be easily constructed. As Dr. Rennie had resolved to keep a diary, he made it his diurnal practice to say something, whether he had something to say or not. This is the unhappy lot of the newspapers, which must equally make their appearance every morning, whether they record a revolution or have really nothing beyond the police news. Some of Dr. Rennie's entries are, therefore, exceedingly trivial; *e. g.*: 'It was so very hot that nobody could sleep till daybreak;' which, considering that the locality was Peking and the time Midsummer, is not very surprising. Although the work is too desultory and ill-constructed to render a continuous perusal pleasant or even possible, there is in it a large and important collection of facts which will greatly assist the reader in forming a conception of the Chinese.

A very beautiful book was issued early in the season by Mr. Bertram, a well-known authority on fisheries, especially Scottish fisheries, entitled 'The Harvest of the Sea.' In addition to much splendid illustration, and very interesting letterpress, the book aimed at some important practical results. Mr. Bertram argued

that we were injuring ourselves by over-fishing; that our supplies of fish, so far from being inexhaustible, were really suffering; and that, in point of fact, it is only a popular delusion to suppose that there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. He says that we are very improvident in the item of fish, and are ruining ourselves by our improvidence. Curiously enough a Parliamentary Report on the subject of the Deep-Sea Fisheries was issued directly after the publication of Mr. Bertram's work, and this Report arrived at a diametrically opposite conclusion. It strongly urged that renewed and more vigorous attention should be given to the fisheries, and held out glowing expectations of the results that might be realized. Mr. Bertram has not succumbed before the parliamentary report. He will not allow the reputation of his book and his own professional reputation to be damaged by this parliamentary criticism. He returns to the charge, vindicates his conclusions, and impugns that of the commission of inquiry. Other things being equal, we should rather be inclined to vote on the side of special authority than to yield blind credence to senatorial wisdom. Fish legislation has, in some respects, been singularly unsuccessful. Sir Henry Rawlinson, at the dinner of the Royal Geographical Society, mentioned that when the Fenian raid across the Bay of Fundy, in Canada, was first spoken of, he did not believe that there were more than half a dozen members in the House who knew where the Bay of Fundy was. When our members legislated for salmon they must have known just as much, or as little, about the natural history of the salmon. In Cornwall, for instance, they prohibit salmon fishing when salmon is in season, and allow it in the spawning season. In the beautiful Fowey river, both stream and estuary, where Mr. Tennyson has poetized, and where lovers of rural sports may resort, perfect shoals of fine salmon escape the poor fishermen, which for them means the loss of bread, meat, and clothing, and when the legal leave comes, it comes too late to be

of any service. Mr. Bertram's knowledge of Scotch fisheries is most thorough, but his information in several respects appears to be defective in respect to British seas and streams. Moreover, fishing with him is too much a matter of business; he lacks the serene philosophy and the keen sense of natural beauty which ought to distinguish the Piscator of the Izaak Walton stamp. But the book is good reading, and highly suggestive of good feeding.

A really very splendid work is the new volume, the third, of Crowe and Cavalcaselle's 'New History of Painting in Italy.' Mr. Crowe is, I believe, one of the pleasant society of Anglo-Parisians; a society which has just lost one of its brightest and most eccentric stars in the Irish gentleman best known as Father Prout. Many a reader used to seize the 'Globe' for its French intelligence, because poor Mahoney used to contribute this, and the chances were that there would be something racy. If I remember aright, Mr. Crowe is the author of an unpretending, but useful and accurate 'History of France.' Encouraged by the success of their 'Early Flemish Painters,' Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, under the auspices of Mr. Murray, are persevering in their costly and elaborate work, which is drawn up from fresh materials and recent researches in the archives of Italy, as well as from personal inspection of the works of art scattered throughout Europe. In great measure the work is for an esoteric circle, but every one would find it useful as a work of reference, and the magnificent illustrations with which it is thronged impart to it a high artistic value. But even the most enthusiastic art student will be oppressed by the minuteness of the criticism and the multiplicity of the details. The strongest interest of this work, as with Dr. Wagner's 'Art Treasures of Great Britain,' will be felt by the proprietors of the pictures criticised. Indeed such works as these must sometimes create a very strong and unpleasant sensation among the collectors. Sometimes, indeed, the sensation may

be a pleasant one, when a picture which has been remanded *au quatrieme*, or has been placed behind a staircase, is declared by the authorities to be a very precious example of some distinguished master. But generally the decision is the other way. Thus the Butler-Johnstone supposed Andrea del Sarto is declared 'not done in the master's style nor according to his habits.' Another one, belonging to the Duke of Hamilton, at Hamilton Palace, is said to be, 'more truly a slovenly thing by Bacchiacco.' Another one belonging to Mr. Ashburnham, near Tunbridge Wells, is 'weak and washy.' It is likely that a pupil worked this up from Del Sarto's original, possible that it had been left unfinished at his death, and was completed by another.' The criticism is not always so unfavourable. Of the Panshanger portrait (Earl Cowper's) they say: 'The painting is clearly Del Sarto's, and finely touched.' Mr. Holford's is declared to be only a school copy of a picture at Madrid. These are samples of the Home criticism. The literary work is done in a very careful and conscientious manner. Every one will now be able to give intelligent praises to the works of Pietro Perugino. The work is a modern Vasari.

Whatever Lord Macaulay may say about the Boswelliana lues, the Shakesperiana lues is a still more destructive disorder. A more fatal disease can hardly occur to any human being. It is a disease which requires the severest antiphlogistic regimen. If it passes from an acute into a chronic state the results are truly pitiable and appalling. Every scrap of Elizabethan literature ought to be labelled 'Poison;' but perhaps the speediest and most efficacious way would be to transfer the sufferer to a private lunatic asylum. These are strong words, but they are supported by strong facts. I know an intelligent, religious, and estimable gentleman: in an evil hour he plunged into the Shakespearian vortex. He ought to be a prosperous man. But he himself is unknown, his children uneducated, his very house uncarpeted. The whole of his time, and his little stock of

available hundreds have been lavished away in the search after Shakespearian discoveries. He possesses an admirable Shakespearian library, and the ordinary reader little suspects of how many volumes Shakespearian literature consists. He is waiting for the triumphant demonstration of a theory which will utterly confound all previous editions. Amid the ruin of his household gods he is waiting still, and fishing for the one-eyed perch. This sorrowful recollection is suggested to me by the handsome, bulky volume lying on my table by Mr. Gerald Massey; 'Shakespeare's Sonnets never before Interpreted: his Private Friends Identified, together with a Recovered Likeness of himself.' There, take it away; the title is quite enough. The poor man evidently thinks that he has caught the one-eyed perch. I do not expect that Mr. Massey has ruined himself, for I observe a dedication to Lord Brownlow — who is extremely solvent — 'in poor acknowledgment of princely kindness.' But Shakespearianism may be too much for any peer or commoner, however solvent. To think that Gerald Massey, who once showed symptoms of being a real poet, should have descended to become a commentator on Shakespeare! Those Sonnets have been the source of much grief. Even the powerful mind of the late Lord Campbell succumbed to them. He thought that Shakespeare must needs have been a lawyer because he wrote, *inter alia*,

'When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of the past.'

The only sessions of which Lord Campbell could conceive were lawyers' sessions—petty or quarterly. I dare say Mr. Massey's book contains some precious grains of gold. Possibly, also, it is utterly baseless. To explain the whole of those wonderful Sonnets on the simple Southampton theory, is to my mind eminently unsatisfactory. I hope I have been misinformed in hearing that Mr. Massey has dedicated many years of his life to the composition of this work.

Something ought to be said about

the poetry of the season, which, in the absence of any new poem by the Laureate, is not especially marked. The thorough Greek spirit and the splendid mastery of metre exhibited by Mr. Algernon Swinburne in his 'Atalanta in Calydon,' naturally interested people in Chastelard. But the interest is gone off. Chastelard, in fact, is not a very agreeable subject. There is an account sufficiently graphic in the last volume of Mr. Froude's History. That Mr. Swinburne shows every promise of being a magnificent poet is true, but none the less he appears to be deplorably destitute of anything like a moral sense. Perhaps, however, the poet has dived more deeply than any historian into the complex secret of the real character of Mary Queen of Scots. But Mr. Swinburne must be called a very fleshly poet. Perhaps Mr. Buchanan is the writer who is rising most steadily and equably to public estimation as a poet. Sir Bulwer Lytton's 'Lost Tales of Miletus' is a remarkable work, both on account of its ingenious literary experiments and the real poetry and eloquence with which it abounds. As metrical efforts, the book will meet with only limited applause; but it bears all the vigorous marks of the consummate literary skill possessed by its distinguished author. A keen regret was expressed in the House of Commons that Sir Bulwer Lytton should speak so seldom, and it is equally to be regretted that he should now write so little. We wonder why Sir Bulwer Lytton and Mr. Home do not produce a work conjointly. It is said that Sir Bulwer's last novel, 'A Strange Story,' really indicates deliberate theories and convictions of his own respecting the supernatural. But unquestionably one of the greatest of Sir Edward's literary achievements was his remarkable speech on the second reading of the bill for lowering the suffrage. That speech ought to be carefully studied by those who would comprehend the breadth, keenness, and versatility of that wonderful mind. He was answered by Mr. Mill, the member for Westminster, and these two speeches form the literary

element of this historical debate. I believe the great master of emotion had the superiority over the great master of logic, and this is generally the case in the long run. Plato is greater than Aristotle, Shakespeare than Bacon. Mr. Mill has mentioned in his place that the attacks made upon him in Parliament have quite relieved his publishers from the necessity of advertising his publications. I suppose, then, five thousand people have read Mr. Mill's speeches to one who has mastered that remarkable article on Compté in the seldom-read 'Westminster Review,' which constitutes Mr. Mill's latest contribution to the literature of hard thinking. We extremely deprecate that servile idolatry with which many men seem to regard the writings of Mr. Mill. But the practical success which Mr. Mill has obtained in Parliament is of an astonishing kind, and no mean tribute to this great writer's powers. It was thought a wonderful thing in the career of Macaulay that he should twice have turned a division by a speech. But Mr. Mill, in the course of this single session, has diverted a large amount of the compensation intended to be granted to farmers on account of the Cattle Plague; and by his speeches on the failure of coal and the National Debt, he has gone far to make a change in our financial policy. Mr. Mill's legislative career may not be a long one; but, to use a logical phrase, it will make up in intensity what it lacks in extension.

Lord Derby's noble version of the 'Iliad' has lent a new impetus to Greek translation. Since the lamented death of Mr. Worsley, of whom all men spoke golden words, the great earl ranks first in this important province of literature. To that province Dean Milman has just added an important contribution, in his version of the 'Agamemnon' of Æschylus, the 'Bacchæ' of Euripides, and a valuable Anthology of other translations. The Dean won his earliest laurels as a poet, and having devoted his meridian powers to church history, he has now returned to his first love, and his latest efforts will also be the same as the first. It is thought that the author

of 'Latin Christianity' grew rather weary before he had finished with the General Councils. By the way, the 'History of Latin Christianity' being finished, when will some very reverend Dean favour us with a history of Teutonic Christianity? Many of these translations of the Dean were read before a youthful auditory, of whom, by an obvious allusion, Mr. Gladstone was one. The Dean was encouraged to publish them by those who retained a vivid impression of the delight with which they once heard them—'one especially, by whose brilliant and busy life such reminiscences, I should have supposed, would have been long utterly effaced.' So far as Æschylus is concerned, the Dean has been surpassed by a lady, Miss Swanwick, who with singular learning and ability has recently translated the whole of the Orestean trilogy. The days of Lady Jane Grey are reviving. Another lady, Mrs. Webster, has translated the 'Prometheus' very nicely. However repellant Greek literature may be to the ordinary reader, the engravings from the antique in this volume are so good that it will be difficult to find a handsomer volume for the drawing-room table. The lighter pieces were embedded in the Latin lectures which the then Professor Milman delivered from the Chair of Poetry at Oxford. The translations from the Tragedians appear to be the recent accomplishment of youthful attempts. The Dean's work will probably have the effect of rescuing from oblivion many almost forgotten names of those who wrote what the Dean is so good as to consider poetry in the declining age of the Greek language and eloquence. But, though Nonnus and Aratus may not be poets, Milman is certainly a poet, and his first-rate rendering of their fourth-rate compositions is always graceful and ingenious. We should like to give a specimen of the Dean's powers as a translator, although we know that to do so by culling a single specimen is very much like judging a house by a brick or a statue by a finger. Here is a very short passage from 'The Clouds,' in which the Dean has well

caught that lofty poetry and eloquence which Aristophanes knew so well how to commingle with broad farce and scathing satire:—

THE CLOUDS.

'We come! we come!
The eternal clouds to mortal sight,
Our dewy forms are floating light,
From father Ocean's ever-sounding home,
Up to the loftiest mountain's woodcapped brow;
Whence on the beaconing watch-tower
bright

Down we cast our ranging sight;
Where the rich champaign spreads below,
And where the murmuring rivers pour,
And the deep endless seas for ever roar.

'For lo! the unwearied eye
Of heaven is blazing high,
Bathing all nature in its glittering beams;
Our dipping mists we shake away,
In our immortal forms survey
Where to the expanding ken the world of glory
gleams.'

The great extent to which classical translations have prevailed of late is very remarkable, intimating that although there may be many unsatisfactory features in the education of the present day, the highest forms of intellectual culture are still carefully adhered to among ourselves. Besides these translations from Greek and Latin into English, there have been of late many admirable translations from English into Greek and Latin. There is a very fair account of them in the current number of the 'Edinburgh Review.' Sir Bulwer Lytton's new volume, both in form and substance, may be considered of the classic type. It is an ingenious attempt to introduce into English metres a kind of Sapphic and Alcaic, unrhymed. Each of the poems consists of a striking narrative drawn from Greek sources of some length, and for this the metro is not unsuited; but we hold that it is ill adapted for the purposes of the ode, which shows in itself that the original metre is radically different from the present remote and debased shape. The volume perorates, not unworthily, with the pretty story of Cydippe, or the Apple, told with those touches of humour which are always lambent in this distinguished author's writings. Cydippe is betrothed to a rich old merchant, but the goddess has destined her for the huntsman Acontius, and so thrown

the maiden into a deep trance. The merchant does not relish a wife who falls into trances, and proposes to cancel the arrangement.

'Proudly the Archon smiled, and tore the contract.

Chremes soon found a bride *with fits less quiet*;
Then from her trance, fresh as from wonted slumber,

Bloomed out the maid and stood amid the flowers.

'Megacles now, sore-smarting at the insult
Put on his child by the coarse-thoughted merchant,

Out from her suitors chose a grave Eupatrid,
Grave as an Ephor schooling Spartan kings.'

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe has also joined the poets. We now require a new edition of the 'Royal and Noble Authors.' The great diplomatist's book is entitled 'Shadows of the Past,' and he tells us in the preface that for many years past poetical composition had been his relief amid the toils of office. It requires an effort to imagine the great ambassador, the terrible Effendi, whom Mr. Kinglake portrays, as engaged in the mild, quiet pursuits of poetry. Here, too, we will quote just a few lines—lines that rise into a solemn, devotional strain, though the cast of the entire poem rather resembles Pope's Universal Prayer:—

'While here we breathe, ten thousand forms
Of grace and radiance charm our eyes;
But Heaven's fair vault is swept by storms,
And nature fades and beauty dies.

'For one brief burning hour of youth,
In life, in love, in joy we trust;
'Another tells th' o'erwhelming truth,
That all we doat on is but dust.'

We now come to those books which, in an esoteric sense, may be called books of the season, inasmuch as they chiefly appeal to readers of the present season as reminiscences of past seasons. Three different works come under this category, namely, Captain Gronow's 'Last Recollections,' the last two volumes of Mr. Grantley Berkeley's 'My Life and Recollections,' and 'Draughts on my Memory,' by Lord William Lennox. The first little book is the last of an interesting series interrupted by the author's death. We say interrupted; for if his life had

been spared there would have been very little to prevent a succession of them. As a Guardsman and a Member of Parliament, Captain Gronow had seen a great deal of the world, when it was not such a busy world as it is now—much more light-hearted and gay, franker and pleasanter altogether. His last entry relates to the Derby of 1865, in which he dwells on the fact that the pedigree of Gladiateur runs through the purest English racehorses; and long before the Derby of 1866 he was taken away. Old Captain Gronow—for he exceeded the threescore years and ten—was one of the strongly-marked race of Anglo-Parisians. Who is not acquainted with that race which, scattered all over Paris, gather to Galignani's as their centre? No man knew Paris better in the days that were brilliant days for the Anglo-Parisians; but in these degenerate days, when the English Ambassador has become a sort of confidential clerk to the Foreign Office, and the great English hôtel is by far the duller in the Faubourg St. Honoré, Captain Gronow had little else to do than stop at home with his family and write out his Reminiscences. The aged veteran lived the past over again; once more he became the careless Eton school-boy, telling how Dr. Keats flogged the boys and Mr. Sumner spared them. Again he fought the great fight of Waterloo, which its few survivors cannot fight over again too often; and, as we are particularly glad to see, he tells his stories with good sense, good feeling, and good principles. There is always a charm in hearing about the Peninsular war, about the Waterloo campaign, about the occupation of Paris; and we readily hear, from a man who can tell us about all this, a good deal of gossip which would be rather contemptible on the lips of other men: the sayings of the Prince Regent, and of the great Beau; how a Guardsman carried on an intrigue with Lady Betty Charteris, in the disguise of an Italian organ-grinder; how a French marquis got invited to one of Mr. William Hope's parties by threatening to call him out if he was not asked; the scandals

and escapades of Alvanley and Waterford; the loves and the debts of the Royal dukes; the old stories of the Palais Royal, and the scandals of the Café Tortoni. Captain Gronow's French anecdotes have more authenticity than most of these anecdotes. Here is one about the Emperor—one of many such which we derive not only from the writings of Queen Hortense, but from many sources which attest the amiability of his character:—

'Another anecdote, showing the good nature of Louis Napoleon, was related to me by the late M. Mocquard, with whom I was well acquainted. After leaving the Malmaison, Queen Hortense settled by the Lake of Constance, where the young Prince was constantly in the habit of relieving poor people by giving away his pocket-money. One day he observed a family in the greatest distress, but having no money to give them, he took off his coat and boots and gave them to these poor people, saying he was sorry that he had not any money for them, as he had given away the allowance his mother made him to some other poor persons who had just passed by the house; but he hoped they would dispose of his clothes to relieve their wants. The weather at this time was very cold and the ground covered with snow; the Prince, nevertheless, trudged through it towards home, and when near the house was met by Mocquard, who expressed his surprise at seeing him in that state. The little fellow, then ten years old, replied, 'I have given away my clothes to some poor people to prevent them from starving.' Mocquard added that 'the Emperor is never so happy as when he can relieve the distressed.'

The Emperor knows the keen luxury of doing a good action; but, unfortunately, it is often those who possess this sensibility, who love to make individuals happy, who are ignorant of the great principles which secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Captain Gronow tells with some pardonable indignation the story of an *English* gentleman who, having known the Emperor at Rome, supplicated

employment in the imperial stables, and was named extra equerry. One of these stories appears, however, to be very improbable. Count D—— told Captain Gronow that one summer day, after dining with them at Chantilly, the Duc de Nemours proposed a stroll, and taking out of his pocket his false wig and whiskers said, 'You, sir, have no occasion to disguise yourself; but as it fell to my lot to be the son of a king, I am obliged to have recourse to disguise and strategy from morning to night.' Now the present writer knows Chantilly well, and has spent pleasant hours in wandering, time after time, among the glades and gardens, temples and streams, which once belonged to the great Condé, and now to the Messrs. Coutts. If the Duke went into the little village of Chantilly, at any other time than the races, we will venture to say that, despite the wig and whiskers, his people would recognize the illustrious master of the château; or if he only wanted a stroll, he might go a dozen miles into the forest and hardly meet a solitary peasant, against whom he would scarcely need articles of disguise. Several tales are told about embassy parties. There was rather a good story going about Paris a little while before this book was published, which its author would probably have included, save for the fact that he lived more in the past than the present. Indeed it would be surprising, if it were not so common, to contrast the accuracy and minuteness of Captain Gronow's earlier recollections with the long blank which the present reign presented to him. It was stated at the time that the personage of the following stories was Lord Cowley, but that statement was inaccurate. At an embassy ball an exquisite in a great state of prostration found his way into a vacant room, and internally bemoaned the exceeding slowness of the whole affair. To him enters an individual, whom for the second we will call *Mysterious Stranger*.

Prostrate Swell. 'Precious slow here. The worst of these embassy parties is, that they always are so slow.

Mysterious Stranger. 'You are better off than I am. If you don't like it you had better go. As the master of the house, I am unfortunately obliged to stay.'

Captain Gronow's story about Bishop Porteus and George III., although he says 'my readers will be interested in hearing the following,' is a very old one: we could mention two or three places where it has appeared. Here are a brace of very short stories which we should like to see verified, but, as a rule, Captain Gronow is praiseworthily accurate.

(a.) When the Grenadier Guards returned to London from Cambrai, where they had been quartered some considerable time, the first thing that was proposed by the officers was to invite their colonel, the Duke of York, to a banquet at the Thatched House, St. James's Street. His Royal Highness, in a letter full of feeling and good taste, in which he alluded to the gallantries of the regiment he commanded, accepted the invitation, and, as was the custom upon such occasions, the army agents of the regiment were also invited. After dinner, Colonel Townshend, commonly called the Bull, addressed the Duke, stating that, as he was then in command of the old battalion, he hoped H. R. H. would permit him to propose a toast. The Duke bowed assent, when the Bull bellowed out, 'I propose the health of Mr. Greenwood, to whom we are all of us so much indebted.' This toast was ill-chosen, for the Duke of York owed his army agents at that moment nearly fifty thousand pounds; but Townshend considered it a good joke, for he used frequently to boast of having astonished the Duke with his witty toast. Townshend was the brother of Lord Sidney. He was considered by the officers and men of the regiment to be intrepid and brave: he was unfortunately a slave to good cookery, which was the principal cause of his death.

(b.) At the commencement of 1817, the Duke of Clarence, bent upon improving his pecuniary means, decided on marrying a rich heiress. The report was circulated

all over England (where it produced the most intense sensation) that the Duke had, with the consent of his brother, the Prince Regent, actually proposed to Miss Wykeham, whose estates in Oxfordshire were large and of immense value. When the event was communicated to Queen Charlotte, his royal mother was outrageous. She flew into a violent rage, and with vehement asseverations (either in English or German) declared that her consent should never be given to the match. The law officers of the Crown were consulted, cabinet councils met daily, and after much discussion ministers determined on opposing the Duke's project, notwithstanding the opinion of one of the best lawyers, that 'a prince of the blood royal being of age, and notifying his intended marriage previous to its taking place, was at liberty to marry without the consent of the king, unless the two Houses of Parliament should address the Crown against it.'

The excitement among all classes was at its height, when the 'Morning Post' informed the world one morning that the Duke's intended marriage was entirely 'off,' H. R. H. having been prevailed upon by the Queen to forego his intentions. In this course Queen Charlotte was evidently supported by the rest of the royal family; and it was whispered that as an inducement to the Prince to behave as a good boy, the Queen, Prince Regent, and his royal sisters had subscribed a sufficient sum among themselves to pay off all H. R. H.'s debts, and to provide him with an increase of income for the future. Much amusement was caused at the clubs by a caricature of an old sailor, called 'the love-sick youth.'

Mr. Grantley Berkeley has just published volumes three and four of his 'Life and Recollections,' a very poor and imperfect sort of life and recollections, which cannot give much pleasure in the recollecting. The present volumes are incongruous and made up, a mere manufacture for the market. Last year Mr. Berkeley published two volumes of his 'Life and Recollections.' The work was not an unpleasant sort of

literature. It was a kind of after-dinner talk. Men will gratefully listen to any one who will enliven the conversation as they sit round the mahogany, and are not very careful about the quality of the wit, if it only elicits the laugh that helps digestion. The misfortune is that these laughs are becoming less frequent than they used to be. The clever conversationalists are discovering that it is better to talk to the public than to talk to their friends. 'Would you believe it, sir,' said a distinguished friend of the writer, 'I spent an evening with G——, who is the cleverest man out just now, and he never opened his lips. He was taking it all in and saving it all up for his next article. When I was a young man, sir, gentlemen would talk freely over their wine, and never took thought of reserving themselves for print.' There can be no doubt but Mr. Grantley Berkeley has told many of these stories over his wine. His veracity has been strongly impugned in several particulars; but he has probably told these particular stories over so often that he firmly believes that they are true. The disgraceful story about L. E. L. in the first series has been very sharply commented on by Mr. S. C. Hall in the 'Art Journal;' nor will Mr. Berkeley's rejoinder in the present volumes be looked upon, in all probability, as very satisfactory. Mr. Berkeley has quite forgotten the homely proverbs which tell how it is an ill bird that fouls its own nest, and advises that it is best to wash dirty linen at home. Those few persons who care much for the Berkeley nest and the Berkeley family linen, after reading this book should look at a well-known pamphlet, which is a reply to it by the other surviving sons of the late Earl and Countess of Berkeley. In the first series Mr. Grantley Berkeley brought down the simple story of his useful and honoured career to the state of his health 'as leaves him at present;' when having objurgated Bournemouth on account of its excessive addiction to divine service, he found himself Sir Ivor Guest's tenant of a little shooting lodge, with plenty of shooting

and fishing, and two miles from the pioneer of civilization, the nearest postman. Mr. Berkeley knows a good deal about shooting and fishing; he is also an authority upon prize-fighting, being personally acquainted with the illustrious Heenan, and having committed a spirited assault on Mr. Fraser, the original publisher of 'Fraser's Magazine.' Moreover, Mr. Berkeley has a facile pen, concerning which his brothers, with fraternal frankness, quote the words: 'There are many people whose intellect and judgment would stand much higher in the world if they had never been taught to write. A whole swarm of absurd impulses cluster round the pen, which leave them alone at other times.' The public having tolerated Mr. G. Berkeley's previous volumes, or at all events having bought an encouraging number of copies, Mr. Berkeley has ingeniously spun out two more volumes about himself, with the help of reprinting some third-rate contributions to some third-rate periodicals.

So here we have no less than four big volumes about Mr. Grantley Berkeley and his belongings, the value of the whole being about that of Captain Gronow's last thin publication. We are very far from saying that they do not contain several good things; but it becomes an open question with us, as with the young gentleman in 'Pickwick' in his studies over the alphabet, whether it be worth while going through so much to get so little. Of several events here recorded, it was worth while having a contemporary account. Such was the Eglinton Tournament, got up by the last lord, a frank, kindly-hearted man, almost idolized by many Scotchmen—and, what was quite as dear to his heart, for so testifies a letter he wrote me during his vice-royalty,—equally beloved by Irishmen, among whom he was the most popular of Conservative Lord Lieutenants. Mr. Grantley Berkeley did not take part in the costly revival of chivalry at Eglinton Castle, for he avows himself, if not a disinherited, at least a poor knight, and of course, the frankness of this avowal

must conciliate sympathy for him. There is a good deal of sense in the following remarks, and we wish he had acted up to them:—

'Supposing the affair to have been so arranged that there had been a chance of remuneration, as of old, I would have risked the upshot of it, and run my chance. I had entertained a fancy for going to the tournament in disguise, with no heraldic device or banner announcing my name, and to have pitched my tent as an obscure knight, desirous of entering the lists. Supposing that I were successful in the contest, then to have denied the chosen Queen of Beauty, and have claimed my right to substitute one of my own selection.'

Again, there is something interesting in the personal mention of Dr. Jenner, who used to live at Berkeley, and we only wish that Mr. Grantley Berkeley had told us more:—

'Dr. Jenner's house was on one side of the old town churchyard, and the high palings of the grove on the banks of the castle moat were on the other. His garden and our grove almost met at respective corners abutting on the graveyard, where it opens out by a stile on an orchard called the Little Park, which was the scene of the destruction of "ye game of red deere," when Queen Elizabeth and her favourite Leicester made their unconscionable raid upon my ancestor's castle and domain to which I have already alluded.' Dr. Jenner often visited Cheltenham. 'When that celebrated physician first went there, Cheltenham consisted of but one street, and the bright little trout-stream, the Chelt, whence the town takes its name, meandered across the road, glistened in the sun, and, haunted by the emerald-hued kingfisher, lost itself in bosky wilds. Kingfisher, trout, and glittering pebbly strand, alike are gone.' The curious thing is that, having quoted with great triumph an approving note from Lady Blessington to himself in the past, he attacks her repeatedly and savagely in the present. One serious objection to this work is that he introduces us

to a good deal of hard swearing; another serious objection is, that we are too much thrown into the company of demireps and coryphées. It is true that Mr. Grantley Berkeley gravely shakes his head and propounds his moral platitudes; but this hardly impairs the gusto with which he tells stories which will hardly bear repetition. Mr. Grantley Berkeley, in a high state of morality, if not very edifying, is at all events exceedingly amusing. But to see him in his highest perfection, we should read him when he is discussing theological topics. He very gravely discusses the subject of preternatural agency, apropos of spiritualism, and introduces that well-known personage, the Cock Lane Ghost. He comes to the conclusion that spiritual manifestations 'are quite as nearly allied to the supernatural as Puseyism is to Apostolical Christianity.' This, to an ordinary understanding, would quite leave the question open as to the reality of spiritualism; but Mr. Grantley Berkeley hastens to explain that, however bad spiritualism may be, it is far superior to Puseyism, and is 'the more worthy of the two.' Now, in spite of the bad opinion which his brethren entertain of him, we really believe that Mr. Grantley Berkeley is inclined to be cleverish, and can sometimes write not ill, and therefore we would earnestly recommend him not to commit himself by talking on subjects of which he is profoundly ignorant. About the turf, and gambling, and intrigues, and assault and battery, he is probably a very good authority; but we hardly think people will care to listen to him on the subject of Apostolical Christianity.

Lord William Lennox has also something to tell us about himself. There is something psychologically interesting in these curious self-recollections. These gentlemen autobiographers have no notion of anything like reticence. They betray their follies and weaknesses with the most amiable frankness, and so unconsciously mirror the nature of society around them. Lord William Lennox is rather a veteran in the literary way—that is, in a certain

sort of literary way. Mr. Grantley Berkeley has some remarks to offer respecting his comrade in letters and arms:—'It used to be a great joke among us speculating why William Lennox, who was in the Blues, never came out, and why he never seemed to join in any sports of the field. We knew that in the regiment he did not shine on horseback, and that on one field-day he had to hang on with both hands to the sheepskin, or shabrack, over a portion of Wormwood Scrubs, either to prevent or to ease his descent to the ground. Our inclinations to question on the subject increased when, in later years, he came out strong in magazines and reviews on sporting adventures, as a sporting writer.' This is a much milder book than Mr. Berkeley's. Mr. Berkeley's book is rather a wicked book; Lord William's is only weak and silly. Compared with G. B. he is chivalry itself to Lady Blessington. Moreover, no one can deny him the merit of his share in the Battle of Waterloo. At Lady Blessington's he made the acquaintance of the present Emperor of the French, at a party where he met Madame Guiccioli. 'While conversing with the Guiccioli, Count D'Orsay approached us, and, apologizing for his intrusion, said that Prince Louis Napoleon was anxious to be introduced to me, with a view of thanking me for my kind advice. Accordingly, I took leave of madame, but not before I had received her permission to call upon her at Sabloniere's Hotel, in what the ordinary frequenters of Leicester Square call "Ce plus beau quartier de Londres." The Prince received me most graciously, and thanked me for the interest I had taken in his welfare. The service was so trifling that it had nearly escaped my memory until brought back to me by D'Orsay and the future ruler of France. Trifling as it was, I clearly saw that it had created a favourable impression on the mind of the Prince, who requested that I would call upon him in Carlton Gardens. . . . To this slight cause I was indebted for an acquaintance of a most friendly nature, which

brought about many social meetings; and since this was written, I have to acknowledge a further result of our acquaintance, in the shape of a presentation copy of the "*Histoire de Jules César*." Another distinguished foreigner whom he tells us of was Carl Maria von Weber. He was present at Tom Cook's, where for the first time the grand *maestro* played the music of 'Oberon.' This visit of Weber to London probably occasioned his death. The excitement of his triumph, and of acting as conductor at his own benefit concert, was too much for him; he was found lifeless in his bed. The following is one of the best of Lord William's stories, if for no other reason than that it is the shortest. A certain set of men, including Theodore Hook, Barham, and Cannon, 'had agreed to dine at Twickenham. Cannon being, as he irreverently termed it, eel-pieously inclined, dinner was ordered in an arbour at the celebrated Eel Pie Island; and at six o'clock on a bright summer's evening we were ferried across the water.

"What fish have you, waiter?" was the Dean's first question.

"Soles and heels," responded the attendant.

"Can't dine off shoe-leather," he responded. "Is the sherry cobbler well iced?"

"Yes, sir."

"Hook'ems," continued Cannon, "Dryden must have had a prescient idea of the American drink, for he remarks, 'Straws may be made the instruments of happiness.'"

But he tells a painfully long story about an adventure with the actress Maria Foote, afterwards the Countess of Harrington, at the expense of the late distinguished diplomatist, Sir Henry Ellis. When a young officer, Ellis was stage-struck with Miss Foote, and ensconcing himself in an old lumbering hackney he used to watch near her house or the theatre, for the chance of finding her alone. Hearing the lady exclaim, 'I insist upon your not persecuting me,' Lord William offered his protection, frustrated the innamorato's attempt at an introduction, and obtained an introduction for

himself. For many hours he was in great trepidation of a challenge; but Ellis took it for granted that it was a relative who had interposed. A quarter of a century afterwards the two men, probably much quieter people, discussed the matter together. It was a good joke for a mess dinner, but, perhaps, hardly worth while for an aged man to record it among events of his biography.

We leave these gay old boys to tell their own stories, and turn to other literature of the same description, but of a higher kind. Only we must say that this new feature of the literature of our time—a man's publishing his own history, making capital out of his own individuality, unbarring the secret portals of his life that all may peer in, strikes us to be very questionable taste. In much the same way, *magno intervallo*, Mr. Thackeray gave his lectures and Mr. Dickens gives his readings. It is a very different thing when memoirs have been published long after their writers have passed away, and those affected by the public mention of their names have ceased to rejoice and grieve. Two estimable persons, Lady Theresa Lewis and Mrs. Henry Baring, have recently presented the public with such memoirs. It was last autumn that Lady Theresa Lewis issued the three bulky volumes of the Berry Correspondence, a perfect repertory of facts relating to the brilliant vanished age to which the venerable sisters belonged in the fullness and freshness of their powers. It was the last of several simple, massive services rendered to literature; and now the worthy editress is gone over to those who, in the tender Latin phrase, are called the majority. We wonder if Lady Theresa was in the habit of writing careful journals in the same sort of way as her friend Miss Berry. As the wife of the lamented statesman who would have been the best possible leader for the great Whig party; as the sister of the distinguished clergyman who led the van of the Palmerstonian bishops; as the sister also of our Foreign Secretary, her diary, if she kept such, will be of inestimable importance to a future

generation, as interesting as the diary which, for a long time at least, was kept by the late Lord Macaulay. It is curious to reflect that the small-talk and gossip of this generation will furnish materials for the history of the generation after the next. We suppose that at the present day there are Miss Berrys and Captain Gronows somewhere who are recording their experiences. I suppose that when their books come out, say in 1966, there will be passages of this sort: 'Went to the Royal Academy. Saw Mr. Maclise himself looking at his great picture. Few recognized the painter, but I whispered my congratulations. Dined at Lord C—'s. Mr. Disraeli more amusing than ever. I thought, however, that he was too severe in some of his remarks on the conduct of the Reform Bill. They all say that he knows more about Reform than the whole of the Cabinet put together. Lord C— thinks that the country is going to the dogs. Afterwards to the Opera. A good thing that poor Grisi saw her mistake, and retired while it was possible to do so with passably good grace. Strange stories about Prince Christian. At the House, but Lord Romeo was too much for me. Looked up some fellows at the Garrick the very last thing. Fixed to dine with our set at Greenwich. The dinner is to cost three guineas a head. Mem.: might it not be wiser to have three dinners at one guinea a head?' Such memoranda appear very trivial, but a great number of these, reflecting the many moods of many minds, will not be without value to the future historian, and of great interest when the personages of the day become the characters of history. The Bishops dining at Lambeth; the Literary Club meeting in a grand social rather than a literary way; artists and *littérateurs*' talk in rooms; the clerical social meetings at the West-end, will all be better for the Boswell or the Berry who describes town-talk; the lack of long, familiar letters will be the great obstacle to our descendants knowing as much about us as we ourselves know about our ancestors.

The 'Windham Diary' ought to be a great political book, but it is nothing of the sort; yet it is an interesting book, both for those scanty gleams of social life of which we have just given an estimate, and also on account of the curious psychological study which these autobiographical fragments afford. They relate to a period in our history with which most people have only a kind of fallacious familiarity. The vast scattered materials have never yet been marshalled into due order and informed by a guiding and impartial mind. The frank, chivalrous character of Windham, although we perceive in it shades and flaws hitherto unsuspected, is still elevating and attractive. One reads regretfully of the noble woods of Felbrigg Hall, where the great statesman delighted to wander and meditate, which the unworthy representative of his name and estates, but not his race, ruthlessly cut down. But as the poor lunatic has passed away, we can do nothing more but only regret that fatal eloquence of Sir Hugh Cairns, which persuaded a British jury into the insane verdict that poor young Windham possessed a sane mind.

Another memoir of a very interesting kind, intermediate between the two classes we have just discussed, is the 'Memoirs and Correspondence of Field-Marshal Viscount Combermere,' by his widow Viscountess Combermere and Captain Knollys. In such volumes as these private and public history become synonymous. Such a record as this was due to a high-minded soldier, a devout gentleman, a very Bayard of warriors *sans peur et sans reproche*. The work traces the career of the renowned Stapleton Cotton from the days when he was the careless, audacious Westminster boy to the time when he was nearly a centenarian, the most renowned of the great Duke's captains after Lord Raglan was gone. It is now-a-days reading for dated history to follow the warrior in his campaign with Wellesley against Seringapatam and in the Peninsula, and it also seems only the other day when Lord Combermere was one of the leading

social influences of our modern society, so prolonged was that life, and so vast the stride of events. These pages glitter with some very characteristic letters by Lady Hester Stanhope, where we see her Syrian adventures anticipated in her remarkable girlhood. Georgina Townshend appears, however, to be a still more remarkable young woman. It is a proof of the strong fascination which the Emperor of the French has over modern life, that the most trivial anecdotes respecting him are carefully collected. Thus it is recorded in these pages, that having to dine with Lord Combermere, Louis Napoleon did not appear till both soup and fish had been removed. Lord Combermere was one of the very few persons who formed a correct estimate of the great qualities of the exile, and used to be greatly annoyed when his friends underrated him. But we must dismiss the work with its mere mention in our *catalogue raisonnée*.

Now for a brief glance at French literature. The three most remarkable volumes which have been published of late are unquestionably the second volume of the Emperor's 'Jules César,' 'Les Apôtres,' by M. Renan, and Victor Hugo's 'Travailleurs de la Mer.' But the first two are continuations, and the interest of continuations is always inferior to that which originally belongs to the first appearance of a work. The Emperor's work will chiefly interest two very different classes of people. These are respectively, Latin scholars, who will be anxious to find whether the enormous resources at the Emperor's command have enabled him to elucidate any doubtful points and add to our knowledge of historical facts; and statesmen and diplomatists, who will study the work as we study a curious puzzle, to see if it will fling any information on a possible reconstruction of the map of Europe. But for the general reader this book will have little attraction. It is very seldom that a French author writes in so dull a way as the Emperor. As a rule, the bright, polished, diamond-like language of France breaks into wit as readily as the Italian language does

into rhyme and rhythm. But Louis Napoleon was always a heavy writer. Even the famous 'Napoleonic Ideas' reads more like the production of an obfuscated Englishman than of the cleverest Frenchman of the day. I suspect that not very many persons whom one meets will be able to give a lucid account of Caius Julius Cæsar. Mr. Merivale, the accomplished chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, in his well-known work, gives them all the information they want in a much more interesting and intelligible manner. I understand that the Messrs. Levy are very much disappointed with the limited circulation of M. Renan's new work. The rush for the famous 'Vie' was enormous; I expect that more copies were sold of it over the counter of the shop in the Rue Vivienne than of all the new plays. But until the book is violently denounced and formally placed under an ecclesiastical ban it will make no great stir. When good Catholics understand that it is a sin to read it, of course they will begin to read it, but hardly till then. Victor Hugo's work, although it falls infinitely behind that masterpiece 'Les Misérables,' is still a greater work of genius than any contemporary fiction of the present year. But the book will not greatly please English readers, although the scenery and personage smay be considered English; and Victor Hugo has honestly handled both without that unfairness and caricature which generally belongs to French treatment of English subjects. Only those who are intimate with French literature—especially Victor Hugo literature—will fully enjoy it; and these will prefer the French—hard and queer as the vocabulary is at times—to the English version, which is, however, quite praiseworthy. I hear, with regret, that Victor Hugo has just lost a little fortune among those eccentric people east of Temple Bar, Bulls and Bears as they are called, who get up joint-stock companies, panics, and failures. 'Light come, light go' says the writer who makes mention of the great Frenchman's misfortune. I do not know how

wealth can be more meritoriously earned than by elaborate and lasting writings.

The mention of M. Renan's books recalls to my mind the undoubted fact that several theological works have unquestionably been among the books of the season. The tone of society is becoming more real and earnest, without the miserable affectation of reality and earnestness. Few books have been more talked about than Mr. Brook's 'Life of Robertson of Brighton.' The interest perhaps became a little livelier when Mr. Brook was invited to Windsor Castle, and preached before the Queen. Mr. Robertson used to be well known to that section of society which belongs equally to London and to London-super-Mare. He was well known in his rides on the Parade, and all the fashionables fluttered about his chapel. Again, a man so deservedly conspicuous in society, and so general a favourite as Dean Stanley, could not produce any book without a buzz of comment and praise. But Dean Stanley's merits are always of that commanding order that, if he were ever so obscure, he would become famous. A royal favourite and premier dean speaks from a fine pedestal; but speak where and what he might there would be no lack of listeners. So his last volume on biblical history has received an amount of attention seldom accorded to secular history. Then, again, the remarkable work, 'Ecce Homo,' is affording a regular topic of conversation. It is perhaps a humiliating fact, but none the less a fact, I believe, that the secret of the authorship, and the attempts made to unveil the anonymous writer, are at the bottom of the greater part of the excitement about the work. A man is frequently told, confidentially, who the author of the book is; sometimes it is the great Gladstone himself, and sometimes it is some humble college don, but hitherto the secret has been well kept. As in the case of 'Essays and Reviews,' it was an article in the 'Quarterly' which blew the languid fires of criticism into a blaze. It is a remarkable fact, that each of the three books mentioned—which are,

I believe, the only works of the kind which have become really popular—exhibits a suspected and impugned orthodoxy. The old axiom has received a strong confirmation, that a book ought to be abused to make it sell. But the fact is, that the minds of men are very much unsettled in those notions where it is most desirable that their minds should be settled. From causes which it is not within our province to estimate and argue out, there is a very large section of society which eagerly welcomes any attacks on the old orthodox systems, though perhaps not the soundest in core, either of heart or understanding.

It is not to be supposed that these books represent anything more than that vast theological literature which is constantly outpouring from the press, representing the fact, that in reality we English are substantially a thoughtful and sober-minded people. Clever women will pass an examination in the Bampton lectures, and be able to report to you the results of the labours of the Rawlinsons. By the way, we ought to report the advent of the third volume of the 'Ancient Monarchies,' a real addition to the literature of ancient history. The inherent dryness of the subject is very well represented by the literary dryness of the author, in spite of some spasmodic attempts to give a lively and pictorial air to things in general. The advent of a really great pulpit orator is so rare an event in the Church of England, that it ought not to be passed over in silence, nor yet any sudden making of splendid names. We believe that Mr. Liddon spent a considerable space of time in travelling over the Continent, listening to pulpit addresses in Roman Catholic countries, and endeavouring to penetrate the secret whereby foreign ecclesiastical orators are enabled to hold enthralled the congregations of wide cathedrals. So wide has Mr. Liddon acquired that art, that men will listen to him at Oxford for nearly two hours at a time, and his sermon at St. Paul's was perhaps the most remarkable of the whole series delivered there. Mr. Liddon is brought within the range of books of the sea-

son by the fact that he has issued a volume of University sermons which, if not read by ordinary readers, is at least diligently studied by those who act intermediately between the multitude and great thinkers, those intellectual middlemen who bring home the thoughts of the few to the comprehension of the many.

We gladly turn aside from the pile of books. That unconscionable east wind which has been raging with unparalleled violence and persistency into these opening days of June, has kept us longer over them than we could have wished, and has been loathe to let us free into the liberal air to shake off the *ennui* of over-much reading. For among many of us there is a great deal of this over-much reading; we are veritable slaves of type, and blindly accept our thoughts and facts from the dictation of those who are good enough to furnish us with them. Truly says a poet of our own, 'Knowledge comes but Wisdom lingers.' Knowledge comes—she comes in whole sheets of literature, in the enormous accumulation of facts, in multitudinous reams of comment; but Wisdom lingers; she lingers late, and comes slowly and

comes sadly, and the facts on which she mainly relies are those which are wrung from our own experience, and the thoughts those which are the slowly matured life fruits of the mind. Lay aside your books, my friends, and while the short-lived zephyrs invite you and the hard earth is still enamelled with flowers, read the fair page written in the leafy covert of bosky dells and engraved on the rocks that front the much resounding sea. That open volume is the best teacher both of knowledge and wisdom. Grow familiar, then, with the beauties of animated nature, with other beauties of animated nature whereof honest Goldsmith was not taking count when he coined the phrase. The books of the season are best discussed by the *belles* of the season when the season is over, and clear, concise, and quick thoughts will evoke meanings and sidelights of which the authors little dreamed, and prove the freshest and rarest of criticism. For it is by such ways that the ultimate value of a work is fixed, and the fact decided whether the books shall only last for the season, or take their lasting place in the affections and recollection.

PARIS AFTER EASTER.

IT is not easy to determine in England what particular bent the life of a man will take who exists entirely for the purpose of amusing himself. So great is the variety of our national character, well-marked as are the leading features of it, that a man may be on the turf, an amateur of the ring, beloved behind the scenes, may hunt six days in the week, or may lie on the sofa all day and read novels, and his walk in life will be, comparatively speaking, private and unnoticed. But what our countrymen call 'amusing themselves in their own way,' is not at all understood by our neighbours across the Channel, whose habits and ways of thought are characterized by a somewhat tedious uniformity. The long, low, sandy coast which awaits the traveller at Calais, 'though the sun rises bright in France, and fair sets he,' may supply in its monotonous level, as contrasted with the ever-varying white cliffs of Dover, some reflections as to the manner in which the land they live in reacts upon its inhabitants. The Frenchman's first consideration is publicity—anything else you please, but publicity. To this cause has been ascribed the lukewarm manner in which our national games have been received across the Channel, ministering, as they do, rather to what phrenologists would call self-esteem, than to the Frenchman's master-passion, love of approbation. Our neighbours can be, and do, and suffer; but though they may under sudden impulse go up like a rocket, unpraised they are sure to come down like a stick. If the Spartan boy, in whom our childhood is taught to believe, had been a French boy, he would certainly have taken the fox out, showed him, and put him back again.

The gay, glittering life of which we are about to give some account, and which, like the coats of the butterflies and the hues of the flowers, is at this season daily increasing in brilliancy, is guided by one ruling principle. The fashion which in England may be described as a

current, powerful indeed, but leaving many a still pool and quiet backwater in its course, is in France a resistless whirlpool, a maelstrom into which every possessor of francs is hurled, and kept in a perpetual gyration, till released by death or impecuniosity.

We doubt not that many of our readers have looked at the frontispiece of the 'Vie Parisienne.' In the vignettes which compose it may be remarked most of the salient situations in the ordinary Parisian life; the 'grisettes' whose garment is short, and the 'financier' whose purse is long; the repulsive chaperon who is looking forward, and the impulsive Adèle who is looking down; the successful jockey who is coming in, and the crinoline which is going out; with my lord and my lady in a contemplative and philosophic attitude to crown all. If to these we add some few mental sketches, and bestow a passing thought on the Jockey Club at 4 A.M., with 100,000 francs changing hands in one rubber, at the Café Anglais, time three hours after a 1,500 franc dinner, place under the table and elsewhere; a few studies of countenance at the 'Tattersall Français,' which might sit respectively for envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; Madame at her milliner's in the Boulevard des Italiens, and Monsieur anywhere you please; we think that our imaginative readers will have seized the leading outlines of the picture, and may have patience to endure a few minutes of shading and colouring.

The theatre takes up no mean part of a Frenchman's time, thoughts, and conversation. It may, therefore, not be amiss if we give our friends in England some account of the food which is this season prepared to satisfy the insatiable craving for excitement characteristic of Paris at most times, and certainly of 'Paris after Easter.'

The stage in England, from want of support, has unfortunately fallen so low, that those who have not resided some time in Paris, can hardly form any idea of the intense import-

ance which a Frenchman attaches to *le spectacle*. The dramas and farces which in England find no re-echo in any state of society, past or present, hold in France with very great fidelity the mirror up to nature; and the self-same scene which is passing in the 'troisième au dessus de l'entresol' of the next house, is being represented in life-like colours to the audience of the Vaudeville or the Gymnase. It might be supposed that the domestic troubles, pecuniary embarrassments, and petty scandal, from which an Englishman would gladly take refuge in the healthier excitements of hunting field, moor, or salmon river, would induce our mercurial neighbours likewise to seek some reaction; but far from this being the case, Monsieur and Madame are never more pleased than when they behold the bickerings and intrigues of morning and noon served up at night at a temperature of eighty degrees, with a seasoning of couplets and faintly-tickling puns. It would, however, be very unjust did we omit to look at the other side of the picture. Nothing must strike an impartial observer more than the glaring contrast between the capacity and performances of the minor actors and actresses of London and of Paris. Now and then in England, a meteoric body flashes across the present theatrical darkness, and a Miss Bateman leaves a trail of light behind in the feeble imitations of the rest; but as a rule, the most finished representation in England, whither we repair again and again to study the features of some one great actor, is marred by the abominable mannerism, stilted demeanour, and irredeemable vulgarity of all the rest. Until the stage becomes in England what it is in Germany, a powerful agent in humanizing and educating the people, this must continue to be the case; but it is a pity that in this respect we cannot take a hint from continental nations. France has beyond a doubt much more to learn from England than England from her, but this should not prevent the leaven of French grace having a salutary operation on our own lump. Three representations are at present especially engaging the attention of

the Parisian theatrical public, that is, of Paris. They are 'Barbe-Bleue,' at the Variétés, 'Bu qui s'avance,' at the Folies Marigny, and an old favourite, 'Les Diables Roses,' at the Palais Royal. The first is an opéra bouffe in three acts, by Offenbach, and was produced last February. Since that time the proceeds have been upwards of 9,000*l.* We are ourselves acquainted with a gentleman who has been to see it eleven times. Some of our readers may remember 'Orphée aux Enfers,' by the same author, to which this piece bears some resemblance in its general style. 'Barbe-Bleue' slightly modifies the usual French programme. The fun here is playing at murder, which does very well as a temporary change of the more permanent gratification attending the dramatic infraction of a neighbouring commandment. The old story of 'Blue Beard' is of course the foundation of Offenbach's most amusing and melodious operette, everything having been added which was considered to lend interest to the plot and elegance to the stage effect. Blue Beard himself reminded us forcibly of our eighth Henry, both in appearance and in those portions of his biography which the drama disclosed. It is not improbable that some picture of him was selected as a model. He is brought before the public as equally a foe to vice and a friend to crime, the manifestations of which bent of character are very prettily set to music. We make his acquaintance between the fifth and sixth wives. The former has already passed into the hands of Popolani, his alchemist, who has instructions to send to Hades in as quiet and gentlemanlike a manner as possible the souls of the rejected fair. The present object of affection is Boulotte, who obtains the prize drawn by lot of being carried in sumptuous raiment before Barbe-Bleue, and crowned by him as the 'rosière,' or most virtuous maiden in the village. No sooner is Boulotte seen, than she becomes the sixth object of attachment, and, the marriage announced, the most brilliant festivities are arranged to take place at the court of King Bobèche, of whom Barbe-

Bleue is the most powerful vassal. Unfortunately, however, for Boulotte, within a few hours after her marriage, Barbe-Bleue makes the acquaintance of the Princess Hermia, the daughter of King Bobèche, and determines to lead her ere midnight to the altar, it being then half-past ten. There is evidently no time to lose, so an excellent scene follows between Popolani and Boulotte. The latter is finally obliged to swallow the cup of cold poison, which afterwards turns out to have been merely a strong narcotic. The piece ends by the exposure of all Barbe-Bleue's misdeeds, and the production from behind a curtain of the other five wives, supposed to be defunct, but in reality collected into a little harem for Popolani. Bobèche at first indignantly refuses to confer his daughter on the iniquitous vassal, but being reminded of certain horsemen in waiting at a convenient distance, he suddenly changes his mind, and the 'happy, happy, happy pair' are welcomed into matrimony with the same magnificence as before, and a splendid chorus of 'Hyménée-Hyménée,' &c. History and M. Offenbach are silent as to whether or no they lived happily ever after. It will be remarked that there is no attempt at poetical justice to the amorous hero, who thus sums up his own character :

'Je suis Barbe-Bleu, o gué,
Jamais veuf ne fut plus gal.'

The next piece on our list, and one which has had an uninterrupted run for many months, is 'Bu qui s'avance.' The name is judiciously chosen, for we believe that not a few have been induced to take tickets in order to see what could be the explanation of so strange a title. The derivation is from a line in Offenbach's 'Belle Hélène,'

'Voilà le roi Bar
Bu qui s'avance Bu qui s'avance
. . . . Bu qui s'avance'

'Bu qui s'avance' is performed at the little theatre called the 'Folies Marigny,' which is charmingly situated among trees and flowers at the lower end of the Champs Elysées. It is a very small house, only hold-

ing five hundred, but the enterprising manager contrives to keep it always full, and sustains the principal character himself. This performance belongs to the class termed 'reviews' in Paris, but our readers are recommended to imagine something a little different from the 'Quarterly.' The idea is to place before the public a lively sketch of such of the salient events of the past year as may amuse babes without proving too strong meat for them. Our own pantomimes, of course, attempt to recal in a grotesque fashion the events of the past year, but it is needless for us to say that the fable of the lap-dog and the donkey is here applicable. Politics being entirely excluded from the reviewer's field of action, he is driven to expend all his resources in depicting social foibles, and firing off little metrical popguns at local abuses. In fact, the material worked up on the French stage at the present day resembles not a little that employed by Parisian cooks, where a very little meat indeed is so prepared with piquant sauces, that the original material attains a dignity and importance much beyond its true value. That this species of entertainment should, with the exception of operas, and the representations at the Français, be the only kind of dramatic performance which will pay, is, we think, a fact not flattering to the French people. We have in vain sought to discover any theatre-going section of society which has higher aspirations, and it is matter for regret that a nation so richly endowed with dramatic genius should never try to aspire beyond the region of elegant buffoonery. In this respect Parisians contrast very unfavourably with Germans, to whom, we need hardly remark, Shakspeare is as familiar as Schiller, and who seek to invest 'die Bretter die die Welt bedeuten' with some of the earnestness and significance of the great stage of human life.

It is proposed shortly to open a small theatre for the exclusive performance, in their original languages, of Sophocles, Euripides, Terence, and other classical dramatists. We should think that, left to the tender

mercies of the 'Quartier Latin,' its existence would be short. We may here remark that in one important respect a great change has been effected in Parisian taste within the last few years. Not longer ago than the year 1859 the music of Germany was almost totally unknown in the French capital, and, when known, disliked. This, as far as instrumental music is concerned, is almost equivalent to saying that all real music was unknown. It is to the enterprise of a single individual, Mr. Pasdeloup, who some six years ago conceived the project of rendering the beautiful harmonies from beyond the Rhine a pleasure instead of a pain to the Parisians, that we owe a great revulsion of public feeling in this respect. Mr. Pasdeloup hired a very large circus called the 'Cirque Napoléon,' capable of containing four thousand people, and has succeeded, like a modern Orpheus, in attracting every Sunday as many listeners as the building will hold. We are of opinion that homilies of less value may be heard of a Sunday afternoon than the stereotyped sermons of Beethoven and Mozart.

We will take our readers to one more theatre, the 'Palais Royal,' and will extend to the fair and wise ladies who appreciate the best 'London Society' the privilege of entrance, which they will not enjoy in any other manner.

The Palais Royal Theatre has one object, viz., to make its audience laugh, by fair means or foul. Its managers think that a perception of the ludicrous, as one of the leading characteristics of human beings, must be carefully cultivated. We admit that they fully succeed in amusing, nor were we greatly shocked by anything we heard on the evening of our visit. This, however, was mere chance, and it is certainly not a place for ladies. On this subject there is one remark to be made, which is, that in England, when a play is coarse, it cannot remain a matter of doubt; whereas we are convinced that English ladies might hear 'Bu qui s'avance,' or many of the other Parisian performances, and remain in blissful igno-

rance as to the cause of the titter in the pit and the horse-laugh in the gallery.

'Les Diables Roses' has been before the French public for a considerable time. In plot it is commonplace enough, though very amusing in detail. The rich and insolent suitor comes with note-book in hand and reads to the lady and gentleman he wishes to select for his second parents the tolerably satisfactory particulars he has been able to collect about them. The desired marriage is soon arranged. The future mother-in-law professes herself deeply impressed with the superior virtue and merit of the young gentleman, a conclusion which she is subsequently compelled to modify, for the piece turns on the unexpected meeting of father-in-law, son, and mother-in-law in the most awkward situations. The numerous 'old loves' of the hero of course figure very largely in the story, but by far the most amusing character is Pavillon, a fencing-master. Those who are familiar with the jargon of the French 'salles d'armes,' with the confident style of encouragement in which the 'professeur' addresses the most hopeless pupils, with his self-satisfied anecdotes, and with the chronic jokes which occur in a circle, like the seasons, must confess that Pavillon is nearly perfect. The 'coup du commandant' which he treasures up with mystery as his 'botte secrète,' and communicates in a whisper to any pupil who may have occasion to make use of a foil without a button, at last transpires. The two combatants being 'en garde,' and having exchanged some passes, the possessor of this artistic stroke suddenly exclaims, 'He! les gendarmes!' Upon the adversary turning to look for the guardians of the public peace, he is run through the body. 'Seulement,' Pavillon adds, 'on ne le répète pas souvent, parce qu'on pourrait être pendu.' Later on, when the master has forgotten all about the lesson imparted, he is himself transfixed in the most amusing manner by a pupil with a 'He! les gendarmes!' The wound inflicted is naturally of a description likely

to be mentioned with some reserve by a hero.

To pass from the shadow to the substance of life, we have met in a French periodical with a sketch of the life of 'Le petit Chose,' of which some account may amuse our readers. He is the type of a very large class, the professional 'languid swell' of the French capital, who may be looked on with a degree of interest as a sort of hot-house plant hatched by artificial civilization.

About half-past twelve 'Le petit Chose' wakes, and becomes available for the purposes of active life. He rings the bell for his valet, who admits the light of day. He next enters his bath in an adjoining room, where, reposing in the limpid and perfumed wave, he opens his letters, and has a pitched battle with his tailor. He then repairs to breakfast, for the preparation of which he keeps a special cook. He never dines at home, and the number of places he will dine at is extremely limited. Bignon, the Grand Hôtel, or his Club, or Hardi. He abhors the name of the Café Riche or the Maison Dorée, and thinks perhaps with the wag who remarked that 'il faut être bien hardi pour dîner chez Riche, et bien riche pour dîner chez Hardi.' To return to this young gentleman's morning programme; as soon as he has finished his breakfast he begins to think about his toilet. Having made up his mind as to what he shall put on, he disappears into a fourth room, emerging in about three quarters of an hour fresh as a rose and smelling deliciously. About two o'clock his three-button gloves are well on, and his hat is, as the French express it, 'installé.' According as he goes to see Loloche or to ride, he takes his cane or his riding-whip. Between four and five he comes in to dress, and then off to the 'Impérial,' pour faire un petit bac. In order to be always sure of this amusement, he takes care to belong at once to the 'Petit Club,' the 'Sporting,' the 'Impérial,' and the 'Mirliton,' where they play at different hours. We may remark, in passing, that the game of 'baccarat' has just been forbidden in Paris, though to what

imaginable purpose, so long as 'lansquenet' and other pastimes are permitted, we cannot fathom. The only effect will be to concentrate people's attention in private on 'baccarat.' We will spare those who have thus far accompanied 'le petit Chose' in his useful day the description of his evening toilet. The finishing stroke to his dress at this hour used to be a touchingly simple rosebud, but he has now succeeded in getting a small foreign order; such a little one, but it will do. For him the terrible period of vacuity, when life is a burden almost too heavy to be borne, and yawns succeed each other with fearful rapidity, is the interval between nine and twelve. But the prospect of another 'petit bac' has a sustaining effect on his nerves, and, midnight once arrived, his spirits return. It must not be supposed that he is a reckless gambler, for he has just enough sense to exercise discretion in this respect. His hour for retiring to rest is between seven and half-past seven in the morning; after eight it is rare to find him out of bed. This picture may be a slight caricature, but we think it is best described as a coloured photograph.

These pages have lain some time in our desk, and not only Easter but Whitsuntide has passed away. The lilacs have come and gone, and the golden laburnums have vanished too. Yet Paris does not empty with the usual rapidity, and very many hesitating travellers are here awaiting the course of events. There is a general inclination to retrench expenditure, and the shopkeepers are bitterly complaining that many families have gone to the country without making their usual purchases. War is casting its shadow before, both in the shape of doubt and anxiety for the future, and of present loss in the falling of all public securities. The cafés are full of the most contradictory reports, and it is a grand time for elderly gentlemen who delight in being the centre of a minute circle, and delivering oracular dicta of the most peremptory and the most unintelligible nature. Not that the external aspect of the city is other

than the common one: it would, indeed, require a convulsion of Europe to effect that, and we believe that particular individuals in particular green coats would enjoy their cup of chocolate and their cigar on the Boulevarts with their wonted calmness if the distant hissing of musketry and tramp of soldiery announced another siege of Paris.

• It is not unintelligible that the average Frenchman should make Paris and life in it at once his delight in this life, and that he should dimly trace out for a more perfect state of existence other Boulevarts, still wider, still better lighted, with more theatres and cheaper tobacco. If we consider what French country life is, and the few inducements it holds out, we can hardly wonder that our neighbours cling closely to Paris. Of course it may be said that the country life, like that of the town, has been gradually developed to suit the wants of the nation, and that it is a case of supply and demand; yet we think that an intelligent Frenchman who had spent some years in England would find great difficulty in making his time in the provinces pass without tedium. We except, of course, a few chateaux and considerable houses where our own habits in this respect are copied, and whither people still retire to turn a selection of their town acquaintances into friends. As a rule, wealthy Frenchmen are destitute of sportsmanlike tastes (from which we beg to exclude their apparently genuine love of shooting sparrows), of scientific interests, and

of any strong bias for the study of Nature in an artistic or contemplative point of view. Of course the subdivision of land is in part the cause of this; and it is very intelligible that the instinct of property which might induce a man to spend months of the year in a place sufficiently extensive to enable its owner to enjoy privacy and independence, fails to attach the lively Parisian to three potato fields and an orchard in a remote department. 'Planting cabbages' is their common idiom for provincial life; but agricultural tastes are rare among townsmen, and the sprouting of the most precocious and well-conducted cabbage imperfectly satisfies their innate love of emotions. Like trout in a pond, the first essential to their well-being is a constant flow of fresh water in the shape of small novelties.

Since the above was written, the 'Grand Prix de Paris' of 100,000*fr.* has been won by our own countrymen at the Bois de Boulogne; the first three horses in being all English. Sunday, the 27th May, on which the race was run, was fine, and the crowd enormous. Although prepared for the result on this occasion, the French were not enthusiastic in their congratulations of Ceylon and Primate, and not even 'a feeble cheer the Dane to our cheering sent us back.' This event over, the city will, as usual, lose the greatest part of its fashionable society, and ere long be delivered over to strangers and pilgrims with return tickets.

X.



OUR SEASIDE RESORTS.

Saltburn-by-the-Sea.

IT was last autumn, about the middle of September. I was one of the last men in town. I stood in need of a 'thorough change.' If any of the other few 'last men' in town happen to glance at these lines, I need not tell them what sort of place London was then. Oven, gridiron, all fiery kind of comparisons rise to the tongue, and bring back to remembrance the fretful, worn condition of those weary toilers whose duty chained them down, while the 'world of London' was scattered for play to the four corners of the earth. At last the moment of hard-won freedom arrived, and I could go. Where? It was the old question. I had been too busy to think much about it beforehand, and now that I began to do so, one place after another was dismissed with impatience. Too late! too late! was the fault with most. I was sick of the Continent—too old a bird, or too lazy if you will, to spend my holiday twisting about peaks, passes, and glaciers. I wanted 'setting-up' in a quiet way; none of that spasmodic, make-believe holiday work which seems to consist in first wearing yourself out and then bragging about the feat. So the Continent was not to be thought of. But at home, where should I go? I must have been very bilious I suppose. One seemed to have been everywhere, and for some slight reason, nothing very particular, one did not seem to desire to go back just at present to any of the places ticketed in guide-books as 'favourite,' 'charming,' &c., &c. Things look very black indeed in such a mood. If I had only got away like other people, I could have done so-and-so nicely! A happy idea at length occurred which put me in better humour. A year before some friend said 'You should go down to Saltburn. Nice, small, quiet place—beautiful hotel, and, let me tell you, the snobs haven't found it out yet.' I pondered this last hint. Man, of course, is a sociable animal, but sometimes he

gets a little too much of 'Society.' All great spirits, they say, require a certain amount of solitude. Striking the balance of probabilities, it seemed to me that Saltburn would probably be as good as most other places—it would have the advantage of freshness—if the local notabilities had spirit, and were trying to give it a chance, perhaps it would have some attractions. But if it should turn out a little dreary, why, one could fall back on the greatness-of-spirit idea, and by the help of a little philosophy not imagine the grapes too sour. So I began to inquire about this new watering-place. I looked up 'Bradshaw,' and found him rather hazy on the subject. The place seemed to exist somewhere on the Yorkshire coast, but the difficulty appeared to be how to get at it. I ventured a question to a couple of friends rather famous for the pride they had in their topographical abilities, and the answer was, 'Saltburn? Saltburn? Never heard of it.' This rather pleased me. It had evidently not yet become too cheap. So I set systematically to work, and found that Saltburn-by-the-Sea is near Redcar, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, in the parish of Marske, lying on the shore of the Vale of Cleveland, about midway in the bay between Whitby and Hartlepool. Further, I found out that a branch of the North Eastern Railway, the good old Stockton and Darlington (ever memorable in our railway annals as the earliest passenger line in the kingdom), would take me to the spot. This was enough. I packed, set out, and made my way to York, there to take the chance of the first train which would sweep round to Saltburn.

In the morning I shot out of the grand arch of the Great Northern terminus; at noon I was under the shadow of York Minster; in the evening, after twisting off and on the Cleveland coast, past the huge furnaces which proclaim that there iron is king, I stopped at a neat stu-

tion which I found formed the back of the Zetland Hotel, the central point of Saltburn-by-the-Sea.

It was dark when I got in; I was tired and hungry, so my operations that evening were confined to a survey of my quarters. It was satisfactory. The 'Zetland' I found to be a spacious, well-ordered hotel of some 120 rooms, with what may be called all the 'newest appliances,' and with an unmistakably good cook. This put me in good humour.

Descending to the coffee-room next morning, I shall not soon forget the pleasant surprise with which I took the bearings of the place. Perched on a cliff 150 feet above the level of the sea, the hotel, with its broad stone terrace, faces the German Ocean, and bisects the crescent-like front of the little village of Saltburn, with its pretty lines of extending villas. To the right, intersected by deep gullies, the cliff gradually rises until we come to the bold towering headland, Huntcliff Nab, a clear 500 feet above the sea, which lashes up to its base. To the left the cliff slopes down—down to five miles of long, firm, level sand—on to Redcar, beyond which, in the dim sunny distance, Hartlepool may be faintly discerned.

So much the new-comer can take in at a glance. Behind him, too, he sees the rich vale of Cleveland and the wooded knolls of Up-leatham (the Earl of Zetland's seat). But it takes time, I found, to explore the fairy glen which is the crowning charm of what might at present be called the Broadstairs of the north. Standing on the terrace and looking seaward or to the cliffs you have a bold coast and a bracing breeze; turn off the terrace by a winding road a few steps, and Skelton Beck, as it ripples into the sea, lies at your feet,—on for a few hundred yards into the glen and you are in a new scene altogether. Footpaths lead you through arching woods, the air is soft and balmy, laden with the perfume of flowers. The change is sudden and startling. You are still near the sea, but its moan comes gently on the ear, mingled with the ripple of the fresh water far down in its channel

below. The sun struggles through the green curtain overhead and lights up the wild flowers at your feet. All is cool, quiet, and refreshing. What a change from town life I found it all! At the end of the first day I had made up my mind. Eureka! Here I shall stay. Let those who choose be broiled on the Rhine, or rattle through Switzerland, there to toil and be fleeced and bullied. In this half-known nook of the old country—this quiet eddy on the stream of life, I shall stay while I can. When I am active the cliffs and the sands will afford me exercise. When I am lazy I shall read and dream in the glen. And I did it for a whole month, and came back to work with a clearer head, firmer nerves, and a better temper and digestion.

I suppose there are a good many people like myself who prefer their own country to any place on the Continent, and who are weary of the regulation watering-places, so awfully dear, so awfully hot, and so wonderfully dressy and 'proper.' It is for the benefit of such (provided they have no daughters to get off) that I have thought of writing these few lines about the place I discovered. They may be thankful for a hint in time this season. And as these lines are to appear in 'London Society,' Nature will there be allowed to speak a little for herself. Mr. Arthur Brown, of Saltburn, is an accomplished photographer. So from some points caught by land and sea the cliffs and the woods shall be 'taken down.' It is with half a grudge I let the original pass out of my portfolio. I remember the chuckle of a cheery old gentleman with whom I used to chat down there. 'Well, sir,' he said, 'I hope too many people won't find out this place in my time. It will last my time, sir, and I think our posterity may be left to find out nice places for themselves. As Babbage said about the coal, sir, let posterity find out how to heat themselves; so I say let them find out where to amuse themselves and "pick up." ' However, the old gentleman meant no harm—he was not really selfish. And I think that

those who have had the taste and the enterprise to give the tourist the means of accommodating himself at this lovely spot should receive fair measure of thanks for what they have done. As to their profit, it will no doubt be great, when, in time, the cliffs and glen of Saltburn become more accessible, by a branch railway on the Whitby side, where

now only a daily coach covers the rough fourteen miles between the two places.

I make no attempt to tell all the walks and drives and rides which the place affords. Are they not all written and tabulated in the little local and rather original guide-books of Messrs. Farndale, Tweddell, and others. There is quain

A VIEW IN THE GLEN, SALTBURN-BY-THE-SEA.
(From a Photograph by Arthur Brown.)

old Staithes; there is Mount Shandy; there are Kilton Castle and Kilton Woods. In fact, I did not cover one half of the romantic places. I rotated about Huntcliff, the sands, the coastguard station, the life-boat (not forgetting the hotel at regular intervals), and the glen. The natives say that the glen extends inland about three miles. I worked through about two miles; perhaps some other day I may get through

the other mile, if I begin where I left off.

The mention of the life-boat reminds me that I was at Saltburn during one of those great gales which scatter so many wrecks round our rock-bound coast. From the lofty cliffs it was an awe-inspiring sight to watch the burst and listen to the whistle of the storm. Sad enough, next day, to walk along the coast and see the wrecks washed

ashore, and to hear the dismal tidings come in, hour by hour, of the lives lost on that eastern coast since yesterday's sun went down! How many of those who read these lines have ever studied the 'Wreck-Chart of the British Isles?' How many of them have ever spent (as I have done) an afternoon on the Goodwin Sands? For these, I here

insert an anonymous scrap which I picked up some time ago. It well expresses the feelings called up by the desolation which follows an angry storm at any point on our shores:—

'It is a strange ramble amongst the ridges and hillocks of sand; and for all the tranquillity of the sea, for all the lustre of the sunshine,



HURTCLOFF POINT, SALTBURY-BY-THE-SEA.

one can hardly help a sort of weird, wild feeling. The mystery and the dread of the place haunt you, even as you stroll carelessly on; the exceeding loneliness of it—the very gulls have flown away—is only intensified by the little groups of human beings, who look so small upon the great, long waste—the barren, rolling, shifting, pitiless wilderness. Thus dim, thus indistinct, might loom a caravan in Arabia; and the Goodwin Sands are the

Sahara of the sea. They are a desert *within* a desert; themselves fatal, and circled by the fatal waves. Beautiful indeed they are, with their placid lakes where the surface of the water is not broken by a ripple—beautiful, if you take them in mass, for the gleam with which they answer the glow of the sun—beautiful, if you take them in detail, for the delicate mouldings, fretwork, and tracery where the narrow streams have left the lovely record of their

path; and it is a moment to be remembered when you sit down apart, and watch the white and green of the breakers that curl and curve around the barriers of the sand, and inhale that wonderful air which seems like the very essence of life long-sought, and hearken to the perpetual wandering warble of the wind, that is now hushed into its softest and sweetest murmur. Beautiful, and yet terrible; for, try as you like, you can't forget the history of the Goodwins, and you know that the sad volume has many pages yet unturned. In one single November storm, a hundred and sixty years ago, thirteen men-of-war struck upon them, and were miserably engulfed, dragged down by the cruel quicksands, or battered to pieces by the breakers; and thousands since—from the stately East-Indiaman, home-returning, with two hundred souls on board, to the poor little fishing-smack, with just a couple of sailors and a boy—have gone down as wretchedly. You think of the dark nights of winter, when the wind blows a hurricane dead on shore—when the lights can hardly be seen through the wild whirl and drift of scud and spray and snow—and when gallant men are horribly swallowed up by this huge cruel monster, that waits and watches, that wakes and kills. Thank God that for every story of calamity we can quote another of human daring and endurance; that, when the

storm *does* come, the plainest, roughest boatman on the coast is touched, if but for a moment, by a spark of that electric fire which kindles a man's nature into heroism! As for the dead, if they died at their post and doing their duty, we need not insult their memory by laments; for, after all, there was *that* in them which no storm could kill; and as for the change which we dimly know as death, it was, for brave men, "a beautiful death to die!"

That noble society the 'National Life-boat Institution' has a station at Saltburn, and a fine sight it is to see the crew exercised. Almost under the shadow of lofty Huntcliff lies the little trim boat-house with the tiny craft which can live through the hour of danger and with its skilled hands save lives from that waste of waters.

Nature has given Saltburn-by-the-Sea great advantages, and shrewd eyes have perceived it. It combines inland and seaward beauties and sanitary benefits in a degree which comparatively few other places do. Capital and enterprise have bestowed upon it comforts which in due time will attract many visitors. Then of course it will become less exclusive and less aristocratic, but it will be the means of bringing back health and strength to many a jaded toiler from the hives of Politics, Literature, Art, and Industry.

COMMEMORATION: AN OXFORD MIXTURE.

THE Summer Term hath flown on silent wing
 Beneath the midday June: as the cool mist
 Flits calmly from the fresh green meadow kissed
 By amorous morning; and the Graces bring
 With jocund dance its last delicious day,
 When, in the theatre, 'mid a concourse gay,
 Meet tribute to the past old Oxford hastes to pay.

Have you not stood upon some lonely bark
 In the sad twilight, 'neath a fleece-veiled sky,
 When the green waves change colour, as the sigh
 Of herald breezes that attend the dark,
 Wild sea-night is breathed o'er them; and the deep
 Trembles expectant, roused from the sweet swoon
 Erewhile she lay in, in the languid noon,
 And frets as though she scarce could longer keep
 Some cherished might from bursting forth too soon:
 Then, as the long-awaited Empress-moon
 Lifts her bright majesty, forth bursts the blast
 In frenzied roar to greet her: and from mast
 And tightened cordage draws in furious glee
 The wildest, shrillest chords in Nature's harmony?

Say, hast thou felt this? and would once again
 On good dry land list to a kindred strain:
 Come, stand with me 'neath the *Sheldonian* dome,
 And shut thine eyes—and picture thy sea-home.
 How frets the gallery with murmurs hoarse!
 How threat'ning breezes wing their way across!
 How tremblingly expectant is the hum
 That whispers of a climax yet to come!
 Till one grand, sudden, rapturous clamour rings,
 And BEAUTY enters, in her dark-blue strings!

And Beauty shrinks at first, as well she may,
 From *such* a greeting, and for her alone;
 But feeling quite the heroine of the day,
 Takes all the homage fairly as her own:
 For 'tis no less astonishing than true
 How prompt sweet Beauty is to take her due.

Unlucky moment!—'mid the deafening roar
 A WIDOW enters at another door.
 Sombre and heavy in her garb of ill,
 To chaperone some nieces, 'gainst her will.
 Her gloomy face accepted insult speaks,
 A hard lot borne is mantling on her cheeks.
 Of course there is no doubt 'tis *her* they're chaffing,
 And there sit those great heartless nieces laughing!

Next sails the COMMONPLACE YOUNG LADY in,
 Of large and useful build, with double chin.
 No nervous tremors blanch *her* ruddy cheek,
 Her large round eyes excessive wonder speak.
 She looks important as she settles down
 Conscious, in muslin just arrived from town.
 Do what she will, she can't make out the noise,
 But says that Oxford men are just like boys!

And fast and thickly swarm the fair gay throng,
 Seats for the swift, good places for the strong.
 Small thought for dainty bonnet, dress, or glove,
 And glances interchanged of—ladies' mutual love.

Cheers for the ladies in white and pink,
 And colours of every hue, I think;
 And if they're married, or brought to the brink
 Of the pitfall hymeneal:
 And cheers for every heart-free lass,
 Especially if she goes in for a 'pass,'
 And for those who get 'ploughed,' or wear quizzing-glass,
 Or a *chignon* that isn't real.

And, viewing the case with all its bright features,
 Three cheers (very loud) for the 'dear little creatures!'

Say, what rude Stentor, as the cheers grow warm,
 Mildly suggests that tortured word 'Reform?'
 And whence those dismal sounds of serpent tongues—
 Have undergraduates worn away their lungs?
 Enough, bold muse, we drop th' impartial veil,
 And leave young Oxford's voice to tell its tale.

There *may* be a ring of the metal of Truth
 In the loud-expressed feelings of 'varsity youth—
 Or it may be that 'varsity youth has a knack
 Of clacking its tongue for the sake of the clack—
 But you'll own there's a *something* worth coming to hear
 In the clear honest ring of a 'varsity cheer!

Room there! . The ancient organ breathes, and lo! :
 The Grand Procession enters—no mean show—
 No despicable sight, as pageants go.
 Grand in scarlet, Deans and Doctors,
 With Vice-Chancellor and Proctors.
 Noblemen with tuft of gold
 Magnetic : heroes middle-aged and old
 In war and peace, or science-musing cell,
 On whom great Oxford will bestow her D.C.L.

Hear the Vice-Chancellor from his throne hold forth
 In Latin (with the accents of the North) !
 Sublimely roll the vowels of the past
 From English lips :
 Wise are the ladies' looks—and oh ! how fast
 Each moment slips
 Of such sweet listening—when, a rousing shout
 Directed at
 An individual in the crowd : Go out,
 WITH THAT WHITE HAT !

In vain the ' Vice ' proceeds—the man must go !
 That wretched creature in the crowd below—
 Some ' wicked man,' perhaps, or ' gay deceiver,'
 Whom Pride had put up to a white felt ' beaver.'
 Heedless he smiles, and rather wonders why
 He seems the cynosure of every eye ;
 Till some officious friend the truth revealing,
 Changes at once the tone of all his feeling.
 He looks about—the crowd has hemmed him in,
 He dare not stay—on him depends that din.
 One effort of despair ! At length he gains
 The door, pursued by execrating strains.
 The Oxford youth, he thinks, good manners lack,
 But swears his hats in future shall be *black*.

Seizing a chance so golden, some great Don
 Hands a fair friend up, three or four seats on—
 Then looks unconscious ; but the wily band
 Have caught him—COME, I SAY, DON'T SQUEEZE HER HAND !
 Down sits the proper Don with angry cough,
 Shocked ! but tries afterwards to laugh it off.

Oh ! must not clamour *now* to silence yield—
 Silence, the birth of awe, when heroes great,
 Able leaders in the State,
 And ever dauntless leaders in the field—
 Men in whose brain and valour England lives,
 Bend to the honours Alma Mater gives,
 And one by one assume her laurels fair :
 Can aught but deepest rev'rence reign, as there

They humbly wait in file? Alas! the Muse
 Must hide her shamèd face behind her fan;
 A tear bedews
 Her sparkling eye, as she records the shout
 Uttered, as each new D.C.L. goes out—
 NOW THEN—NEXT MAN!

Yet the Muse smiles and shows her pearly teeth,
 As she lays by her quick historic pen,
 To think how Oxford, as she gives her wreath,
 Takes care to show she gives it but to *men*.

Now forward, nervous men with visage white!
 Prizemen (worse luck!) in verse and noble prose;
 Who in the rostrum tremblingly recite
 To heartless ears that mock the author's woes.

'*Speak up, Sir!*' But how vain our strength to waste
 'Mid such a Babel!—'I say, do make haste!'
 In vain one urges on one's wild career—
 Too vainly!—'Come, Sir, arn't you getting near
 The end?'—And so those thoughts that racked the brain,
 O'er which we lingered with a parent's love,
 And e'en would linger now, must, like a train,
 Be judged according to the pace they move!
 And—though the distance seemeth not so far—
 '*Come, don't you see how tired the ladies are?*'

And, the last prize recited, up we rise;
 Old England's 'Anthem' echoes to the skies.
 'Commem.' is finished—and amid the bray
 Of wheezy diapasons, nearly drowned
 By Undergraduate lays, we pass away
 And carry in our ears a ringing sound.

Well, here is earthly pomp and pageant grand.
 Oh, come and learn its value, ye who list,
 As, gazing raptured at her rainbow mist,
 Ye worship Fame with trump and wreath-filled hand—
 So gaudily she floats!
 And if to thee she be for ever strange,
 Rejoice, and gauge her—*she is but the change*
 For Undergraduate notes.

H. E. P.



SWIMMING AND SWIMMERS.

BY A 'PRACTICAL SWIMMER.'

CHAPTER I.

H. GURR. (*From a Photograph by Elliott and Fry.*)

IN the cultivation of swimming as an art, Society has hitherto taken but very little interest indeed, as compared with the attention bestowed on other athletic pursuits. It requires very little proof to establish the truth of this assertion, but we might take as an instance of the smallness of the support extended to swimming by the youth of our metropolis, the fact that one may reckon on one's fingers the teachers, or, as they style themselves, the 'professors,' of the art; while the figure 10 would tell off the number of amateurs who have within, say the last few years, thought swimming sufficiently worthy of their sustained attention and practice as to earn a 'name and fame' amongst the limited swimming coteries.

There are many reasons to account for this want of sympathy and interest, the most prominent of which,

most unquestionably, is the insufficiency of bathing accommodation in the metropolis. If it were possible now, in these days of joint-stock enterprise, to persuade capitalists to try to make a dividend out of the establishment of spacious swimming-baths, one in each district in London, wisely constructed, and having competent officers attached, to instruct in, and promote the cultivation of swimming, then there might be some hope that the art would secure an attention and interest commensurate with its great utility and value as a healthful agent and necessary part of the education of youth. Although such a state of things is neither Utopian nor visionary, there is no hope for it yet, and but little hope for swimming. The large vats or washing-tubs dignified with the name of 'swimming-baths,' to be found here and there in Lon-

don, and the wretched little broken-down places which, with one or two notable exceptions, form the whole of the bathing accommodation for swimming purposes in London, furnish but little delight to the swimmer. In these an accomplished Leander has as much play (or I should say as little) as is enjoyed by the seal in the tank at the Zoological.

No; when the amateur wants a body of water to disport himself in, he is left to four alternatives: the Thames, the Serpentine, Victoria Park Lake, and the Hampstead Ponds. Now, I candidly confess that there can be no more pleasurable bathing in the world than can be enjoyed in our noble Thames; but you must go up as far as Cookham Lock and upwards to get it at its pleasantest, and I think it will fairly be admitted that there is not much fun to be got out of a swim below Teddington; in the first instance, because of the tide, and, secondly, because of the impurity of the water. This last reason applies also, with much force to swimming in the 'Surps,' as the little ragged boys term the Serpentine, where at certain seasons the water is almost unbearable; but this does not prevent countless swarm of urchins making their simultaneous rush into the cool water each summer night at the signal from Jack, the Humane Society's boatman, for which they wait for hours. Victoria Park Lake must be a great boon to the amateurs in the north-eastern portion of the metropolis; and the north-western is served slightly by the Hampstead Ponds. About the Ponds, however, I must not say much, as the New River Company declare the act of bathing there 'dangerous and illegal.' The first of these it most decidedly is to non-proficients; but as to the latter, I do not see why there should be any objection legally, for the water is but used for watering the roads, and not for consumption as some people suppose.

The remark I am now going to make as to a physical obstacle to learning swimming may appear puerile; but any one who has had much experience of swimming-baths will testify to its truth. Five men

out of ten who have really made up their minds to learn the art—who have wound themselves up to the proper pitch of courage to plunge into four feet of water and to take a few strokes—are effectually checked in their further progress by the violent cold which seizes on a beginner. For those who have not been taught swimming in their youth there is no resource but a few weeks' hard practice, day by day, to enable them to acquire the rudiments of the art. Boys have an immunity from this, apparently. One may see them linger in and out of the water three or four hours, until their skin assumes a curious mottled appearance. It was positively affirmed to me a few seasons ago that some young Blue-coat schoolboys were in the habit of spending the whole of the morning and afternoon of their holidays in the Lambeth Bath, and as there is no 'buffet' where creature comforts may be obtained, they took the wise precaution of bringing their lunch.

The greater the skill in the management of the limbs, whether in rowing, cricket, or swimming, the keener the enjoyment is. Those supine oarsmen who are content with water-craft enough to enable them to swim fifty yards 'at a pinch,' realise but in a very slight degree the pleasure which your swimmer feels at sight of swelling sea or placid lake. Not theirs the charm of lofty header into the wild sweep of foaming water, freed from the Thames lasher; nor theirs the dive from lofty 'coign of vantage,' on rocky shore, into the cool green beneath. Not theirs to ride with crested wave, or glide with the gentle ripples between the sedgy banks. Ah, surely the counsel is wise which points out to society the keen enjoyment springing from the art of swimming, and which urges its accomplishment and cultivation. Few sensations more delightful. The swimmer has quite an interest and love apart for sea, river, and lake. What says the poet?

'And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers; they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was, as it were, a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane, as I do here.'

CHAPTER II.

In Manchester and Birmingham swimming is more cultivated than at Hastings or Liverpool. The first-named towns have sent up to the capital many an excellent swimmer, one of whom has even taken the laurels from our London swimmers, although we have a little man now, of whom more will be said anon, who is invincible. It is a strange anomaly that the art should be so little practised and cared for in waterside towns, and yet be cultivated and studied in manufacturing districts with an ardour which carries all before it, and enables their youth, as we have seen, to acquire a beautifully graceful and rapid style of swimming, which has been the admiration of all connoisseurs.

I once accompanied Fred Beckwith to Southampton, where he had arranged to give a grand swimming entertainment, at which we of course hoped the whole town would be present, and we had, with great care, so managed the proceedings that the fair sex might be represented amongst the spectators on the occasion. As bad luck would have it, however, a travelling circus came down and opened the same afternoon, and Mademoiselle Alphonsine and Monsieur Léon took all our contemplated concourse of spectators, and left us only with the lads who came to compete for our prizes, and who had to be admitted free. Stay, there was one foreigner present, and to add to our discomfiture, when Mr. Beckwith made his usual short oration, as to his 'swimming any man in the world, from a quarter of a mile upwards, for ever so much a-side,' the foreigner sprang forward, and totally disregarding the money consideration which Beckwith had alluded to, he insisted, in his broken English, on swimming Fred to a pole stuck up in the middle of the bath, and back, a distance of eighty yards. Fred had to undress and compete with this fierce foreigner, and, needless to add, beat him easily; but it was the last straw, and we shut up our bath, and went to dinner, leaving to others the chance of raising an enthusiasm for

the art in a town so much connected with salt water as Southampton.

Beckwith now gives, and has for years been giving, 'Aquatic Entertainments' at the Lambeth Baths, and thousands go there to see the sights go on.

Fred would not like to have his receipts so low again as they were on the occasion I have named, and I take it, Jessie, his daughter, draws more spectators than our whole array of talent could have done under the most favourable circumstances at Southampton.

It would be idle to attempt within the limits of a single article to give practical directions how to acquire the art, and it must be quite admitted that to a man who does not swim at all, written directions how to proceed would be practically as useless as an attempt to search theoretically, and in print, the lively steps of the sailor's hornpipe. But it will not be out of place to offer some general remarks as to the various styles of swimming most common now, and to examine their relative merit and effect.

The chest stroke, the ordinary and most straightforward style of swimming is, and will always be, the most popular. Although, as a rule, rapid progress with it cannot easily be made, yet there are amongst the swimmers of the present day a few notable exceptions, who contrive to pass, or, at all events, to keep level with representatives of almost all the other styles describable. With this chest stroke a much greater distance can be traversed than with any other, as it leaves the head entirely free, and is the most natural position obtainable. A good swimmer never tires at this, and while it is a most graceful stroke, it is better performed, as a rule, than all the other strokes put together, as it is the first acquired by the aspirant.

Side swimming, as its name indicates, is a style of swimming on the side; keeping a portion of the head immersed and striking out one arm whilst the other is describing a half circle. It is capital for work against tide, but is principally used to gain speed. It is employed, almost without exception, by competitors in the

racers at the Lambeth Baths. Any old swimmers who fall across these pages may recollect a youth who was matched to swim Beckwith, the then champion, about nine years ago, and if they do they will recall with pleasure the easy dexterity and grace which that youth possessed, and which enabled him to attain speed which was most extraordinary considering his slim figure and his years. It was gravely asserted to me by a professional, the other day, that the side stroke was introduced by George Pewtress, a swimmer of twenty years back. Of course this is too evidently absurd to require refutation, but if it were needed, a curious little old swimming hand-book in my possession, two centuries old, would show the fallacy, as it describes, 'How to Swim, neither on the Back nor on the Belly,' and the directions following clearly point to the system now so much practised, and which is doubtless as old as Adam.

The overhand stroke consists of the ordinary side stroke, but with one arm performing a circle, one half in the water and one in the air; the hands being kept in a cup-like form, or it may be the ordinary breast stroke, but with the arms thrust forth alternately and brought rapidly back through the water. The last method ensures the most speed, as there is a much quicker movement of the arms, but the first is the most popular and most practised as it is by far the easiest of acquirements. The overhand stroke is most exhausting, and always involves a great expenditure of strength; it is only used where rapidity is needed for a short distance, as, for instance, at the end of a swimming-race, or, it may be, to reach a sinking person. There is, however, a swimmer, well known at the Lambeth Baths, who can swim 500 yards in an almost incredibly short space of time; but we are informed he throws a hammer continually in his trade, and that is just the kind of practice needed for his stroke.

There are a good many hybrid styles which I have not space to discuss here, but the three above-mentioned are at the root of them all; there remains but one great

division, and that I shall but touch briefly, and that is, swimming on the back. Man, whether in the water or out, is at a disadvantage when 'on his back;' and he will not resort to locomotion in that position unless it be to go quite gently as a rest. In the sea this style of swimming is very pleasant. Indeed I have experienced few things pleasanter than to lie almost motionless, floating on the blue waters of the Mediterranean, and to be lifted gently up and down by the pleasant waves of that tideless sea.

An amusing episode of this swimming on the back occurs to me. A gentleman from the other side of the water paid the London Swimming Club a visit, and announced to them that he had practised—he said 'invented'—a new style of swimming, and he was particularly anxious to swim any member of the club for something tangible a-side. The condition was to be that the competitors were to swim on their backs half a mile in the Serpentine—no slight task when one considers that the back of the head is of necessity kept immersed in cold water the whole of the time of the race—a period rather under a quarter of an hour.

However, novel as the contest appeared, the Club at once closed with it, and after a preliminary trial to determine their best man, Harry Gurr was selected to swim the 'Unknown.' When the morning came betting was even, but after the 'Unknown' had taken a dozen strokes of his extraordinary style, which consisted of an alternate movement of arm and leg, no one could be 'on' at any price, and Gurr won as he pleased. This was the first, and would, I should say, be the last swimming race for back-swimming—it is so much easier, so much more graceful, and so much quicker to employ the ordinary methods of propulsion, that it is a waste of time to bestow much attention on the cultivation of this style.

'Ornamental,' or what would be better termed 'fanciful' swimming, forms next to the races the pabulum of the aquatic entertainments. Swimming without the use of the arms, coiling one's leg about one's

neck (a feat performed by a one-legged swimmer), floating in different postures more or less elegant, some dignified with the title of 'the Dying Gladiator,' 'Jacob's Ladder,' and such-like feats constitute this branch of the art, the only useful element in which was the chief performance of a gentleman known as 'Old Smith,' who dives in with a suit of clothes on, and undresses while floating.

Most swimmers have a style of swimming peculiar to their physical conformation. For instance, your long thin man takes to the side stroke, your round, stout-limbed young fellow practises the chest stroke, and those who are relatively stronger in their upper limbs than in the lower have a preference for the overhand stroke; and to see either of these styles well and gracefully executed is a pleasure not often to be had save in London or in Manchester and Birmingham.

I do not wish to be understood as disparaging sea-swimming, and if I have not alluded to it it is not that I undervalue it, or think that there are not first-class sea-swimmers to be found everywhere; but I have spoken of fresh-water swimming alone, as I think it may be fairly assumed if a man be a graceful swimmer in a bath or in a river, he will have equal, if not more, facility and grace in the sea; on the same principle that a man who can scull in a racing outrigger may fairly claim ability to handle a sea-skiff.

CHAPTER III.

It now comes to be my province to speak individually of the celebrated members of the swimming world. Of course unchallenged and alone stands Harry Gurr, the holder of the Two-Miles Champion Cup, and the winner of medals, cups, and other prizes far too numerous for me to mention here. There is some little romance, some slight interest in his career; for although it is to be admitted and regretted that the position of Champion Swimmer of Great Britain has no great height in society, yet that class from which Gurr has emerged is far, far below

it. He was, in fact, a shoeblack stationed outside the public baths and wash-houses of St. Giles's and St. George's at Endell Street. Becoming known to the attendants there, he was allowed to have a bath every evening in exchange for his services in collecting the towels left in the boxes, and in sweeping out the bath generally. His aptitude for the water was so evident and his progress so marked, that he was taken in hand by Charles Moore, a one-legged assistant on the premises, and finally he became the *protégé* of a young university man, a gentleman who has on many occasions distinguished himself on behalf of his university at the billiard-board. From this time young Gurr has assiduously devoted himself to perfecting his science and skill in swimming, and is now engaged as assistant swimming-master to Mr. W. Woodbridge at Victoria Park. He is nineteen years of age, seems to be about five feet three or four inches in height, and when stripped and in good condition, which is generally the case, presents a most sturdy appearance, especially about the shoulders and chest. His face (of which we give a very correct copy of a beautiful photograph by Elliott and Fry) is intelligent and pleasing, and beyond this he is modest, civil, and unassuming—virtues very rare in professionals of any sort.

In our larger engraving we have what would be described on the bills of a swimming entertainment as a 'galaxy of swimming talent.' On the right hand we observe Charles Moore (the swimming 'Donato' and early instructor of Gurr) speaking to Mr. Hayes, a distinguished amateur, and one of those who first contested for a Thames cup. The next group is the most important. The short figure in the costume of the Bath is the present champion, and he is talking to Fred Beckwith, the ex-champion, of whom I have had occasion to make mention before. In these two are combined all the best qualifications of a swimmer. Gurr has a strong, effective, and unflagging stroke, certainly not graceful, but still in every way

adapted to a conformation so eminently suited for all athletic pursuits, and which never seems liable to fatigue, for his pace at the end of a long and severe race is greater than at the commencement. Beckwith, on the other hand, has a more rapid stroke and more pleasing to the eye, giving also an idea of a greater amount of skill than Gurr's, but of course this it is next to impossible to decide upon. Beckwith is located at the Lambeth Baths, the largest and most important in the metropolis. He is constantly giving there swimming galas, in which he, his two little sons, and daughter are great attractions. Among other of the feats he performs is swimming the length of the bath with his hands and feet tied, one of the few really difficult of the 'ornamental' feats so much attempted. Had Beckwith and his family lived in the bygone ages, we should have had a good explanation of the notion of the mermen and mermaidens.

Standing behind these two great professors is Mr. W. Payton, vice-president of the London Swimming Club, and one of the most graceful of all swimmers, besides being, for a short distance, the fastest. He swam for and won an open prize for the fastest time of doing 200 feet, performing the distance in 47 seconds, and beating Pamplin and other good men. He, Mr. A. Williamson, the president, and Mr. J. Latey, the secretary, are the gentlemen to whom we mostly owe the present position (small though it be) of amateur swimming. On the left of this group again, actively engaged in lacing his boot, is Mr. Benjamin Newlands, an under-water swimmer. He and others have told me that he has swum 175 feet without coming to the surface, and when we recollect that Mr. Payton's time above water for 25 feet longer was nearly a minute, and that Mr. Newlands is by no means so fast a swimmer, I for one am lost in amazement at the lungs Mr. Newlands possesses. He is also distinguished for his power of floating. Behind Mr. Newlands are standing David Pamplin and the Goliath he overthrew, Mr. E. Donovan. Between them is the

companion in misfortune of Charles Moore, William Woodbridge. These two one-legged professors, with Mr. Newlands and Mr. Howson (whom you will see standing in the crowd on the left hand of the engraving, tall, grim, and spectre-like), perform the most indescribable antics on the top of the water. They make themselves into circles, squares, triangles, four-storey houses, Manx men, and Catherine wheels, in a manner 'ekalled by few and eckselled by none,' as our Transatlantic friend, Artemus Ward, would say. Woodbridge is the keeper of the lake at Victoria Park, where he has had the good fortune to rescue a host of people from drowning.

David Pamplin is, like Gurr, a mere lad, and either he or Mr. Coulter of the Serpentine Club is considered to be next best to the champion.* Pamplin won the silver cup given by the 'Illustrated Sporting News' (from which race Gurr was barred), beating all the London notables and many of the provincial, and has besides won a great number of smaller prizes. His stroke is peculiarly well suited for general use. There is nothing artificial about it; it is natural, and as he swims, scarcely moves the water—in that respect the reverse of his rival, Mr. Edward Donovan. Last season I saw a race between these two for 1000 feet at an entertainment. Donovan, with his large body and giant limbs, started off at a tremendous pace, and making a wash like a Thames steamer, completely frightened his opponent out of the water, although the general opinion among the *cognoscenti* was that Pamplin would have won had he persevered. But let it not be thought I deprecate the powers of Mr. Donovan. On the contrary, I must say I consider him, on the whole, to be the most formidable of amateur swimmers. He, although of great size, is admirably built for the water, his hands and feet being large and his limbs

* It may be interesting to my readers to know that this question will be answered in the course of the month, as Pamplin and Coulter are matched to swim together in the Serpentine.

powerful. He is not, however, gifted with the lungs of a Gurr or Newlands.

Standing near Mr. Howson is a provincial swimmer of some fame, named Johnson. He is lame, but nevertheless is reckoned to be one of the best swimmers in England. It may here be noticed that while every other athletic art or game is debarred to the cripple, he can swim, float, and dive with no perceptible inconvenience. It is really a pleasure to see, as I have often seen, cripples enjoy their only exercise, and paddle about with an avidity and earnestness which gives some idea both of the irreparable loss they have sustained and of the value of the pleasure they are enjoying.

On the spring-board stands J. P. Jones, who was second for Sir William Fraser's medal last year. This gold medal, presented annually to be swum for, the course being a mile in the Thames, by amateurs only, has had the effect of slightly rousing swimmers from the lethargy they appear to have fallen into. The prize has been well contested, and on each occasion has resulted in a capital race. Why do not some other public-spirited gentlemen appear who will give an annual five-pound prize? If any would do so, there would be, even in spite of the insufficiency of baths, a great deal more attention paid to the art by the youth of this country.

I have concluded my sketch of the celebrities portrayed in the engraving. There are necessarily a great number of first-class swimmers

not included therein, such as Mr. Coulter, of the Serpentine Club, who last season swam a remarkably close and fast race with Gurr, going 1000 yards in still water in 16 minutes, and Mr. Mather, who defeated and was defeated by Beckwith for the championship before the rising of Gurr. But if all good men are not drawn there, it is simply lack of room which prevents it.

Early in this notice I spoke of the want of accommodation, and I wish now just to mention a circumstance connected with what accommodation we have. When Gurr swam his back race with the 'Unknown,' he swallowed some of the Serpentine water, the effect of which was to make him actually vomit. Again, when the long-distance prize was being contested in the Thames (in which race three gentlemen swam over eight miles), the competitors suffered greatly from the impurity of the water. Surely Mr. Cowper might look to the Hyde Park water being in a tolerably clear state, and it is to be hoped that the Main Drainage Works and the Thames Embankment will somewhat cleanse the river.

Finally, I am glad to see that the National Olympian Association, at their great gathering to be held shortly at Llandudno, are to give some gold, silver, and bronze medals for various swimming races. I fervently hope that this will give some impetus to the practice of the art of natation, and be the precursor of many other such competitions.



COFFEE-HOUSE AND TAVERN LIFE OF PARIS.

THE decline of the popularity of tavern life in London was put before the readers of 'London Society' in a short article on 'Clubs and Taverns' in our number for March last. The 'at home' tendencies of settled Englishmen lead them to cultivate to the full the domestic advantages with which Providence has blessed them. But with a more mercurial temperament, and an atmosphere which must be confessed to be a little better and clearer than our own, the Parisians have not to the same extent forsaken the public haunt or the open-air restaurant. The Frenchman, as a national necessity, finds it inconvenient or unattractive to live at home; to think at home; to eat, drink, suffer and die at home; and has a fondness for something more *spectacular* in his sayings, doings, and endurances. Publicity, the broad day, the throng, the street, are essential to his reckoning of things as good or evil, as happy or unfortunate, as amusing or deplorable. From this necessary tendency have sprung the cafés, the cabarets, the buvettes of Paris; the multiplicity of which forms a standing wonder to the stranger now as it did in the days of Parson Yorick. M. Jules Simon, in a recent work of his entitled 'Le Travail,' would have us believe that this appetite for company and for refreshment in public places is, especially amongst the *ouvrière* class, of great and evil reflex influence. The frequenting of the cabaret denudes the home, and furnishes the Mont de Piété; and the denuded home, with the clamour of dejected wife and starving children, drives again to the cabaret. 'The cabaret,' says M. Simon, 'destroys at once the physical and the moral force of the workman. Close by the manufactories and workshops these alcohol dens abound—unless there be, as often happens, one which is beyond all competition, and this one is crowded on pay-days. The rooms, the gardens, the courtyards are crammed, and even in the cellars drinking is going on.

A vast number of working men only cross the street from the pay-office, where they have received their wages, to the cabaret, where they spend them. They return to it the next day and the day after, till they have no longer money or credit. During all this time the wife and children are suffering from cold and hunger. They flit round the cabaret with the hopes of catching his eye, and thinking that, after all, a father is not utterly insensible to pity or remorse. But that man is no longer a father, nor even a man; he is merely ruined and drunk on issuing from the cabaret. If he has not beaten somebody, or himself been beaten, the family have reason to rejoice. A drunkard who enters a cabaret is never sure of not going to prison the next day. Many books of morality and medicine have been written on this ignoble vice; the latter are better, because they abound in irrefragable facts.'

But the evil is not limited to the men or to the metropolis. 'Even in France there are towns where women rival men in habits of intoxication. At Lille, at Rouen, there are some so saturated with it that their infants refuse to take the breast of a sober woman. In the mountains of the Vosges infants drink eau-de-vie. On Sunday, in the churches, the air is literally infected with the smell of eau-de-vie made from potatoes. In these mountains there are no more frequent causes of idiotcy and imbecility; for in general the dwellings are healthy, and the water is excellent. The great misfortune is that the children of habitual drunkards are idiots, so that the punishment follows from generation to generation, from the guilty and degraded father to the innocent children. In the manufacturing towns the mayors are obliged to take measures against the cabarets that supply eau-de-vie to children; for there are drunkards of fifteen, as there are labourers at eight; and, morally and physically, they present a melancholy spectacle. Can it be this precocious debauchery and the

consequences of it which oblige the War Department to lower the regulation height for the service?’

Such facts, taken with the revelations of the extent to which absinthe dram-drinking was lately stated to be carried on in Paris, go far to redeem our own country from a monopoly of the charge of drunkenness. Albeit, it is a sorry comfort, in the midst of a popular vice, to know that other nations are redeeming us from comparative degradation, by descending from the moral elevation which they flattered themselves they had a right to claim.

But it is not our present province to moralise. We rather incline to cull what is picturesque or entertaining in the more pleasant phase of the cabaret question. And materials for this are abundant. For it is the complaint of Parisian spinsters, whose chances of matrimony are already down nearly at zero, that ‘*la vie de café*’ is lived in that jolly capital by all the world—by the grandee and by the mechanic, by the rich and the poor, by the artist and the artisan. So in visiting the cabarets and the cafés of Paris, we may perchance have to rub shoulders now with a Duke of the Empire, now with the faded gentry of the Palais Royal, now with the dark and unfrequent conspirator of what remains of the dismal and attenuated streets of the ancient cité.

M. Alfred Delvan, with whom we have obtained the privilege of sauntering through some of the haunts which he knows better than we do, pleasantly defends cabarets and cafés as against the ill-natured objections of those provincial fathers whose last caution it is to their sons, on going up to Paris, to beware of such ‘places of perdition.’ Diogenes the cynic and Socrates the sage, he happens to know, and we cannot gainsay him, frequented without reserve the taverns of Athens; even when the practice brought them into contact with the porters of the Piræus, the lounging demagogues of the Pnyx, and the Anonymas of the Ceramicus. Dionysius the Younger, ex-tyrant of Syracuse, solaced his retirement from the kingly business with visits to

the taverns of Corinth; as Virgil, with his friends Varius and Gallus, pleasantly and even flirtingly passed their leisure in outlandish restaurants. Ovid, Cicero, Marc Antony, in like manner countenanced by their example the amenities and pleasantries of tavern life.

In times more modern Shakspeare frequented the Swan, and wrote there the greater part of his Henry IV.; Luther visited the Cabaret de l’Ourse Noire, at Orlemonde; and the jovial Rabelais, serious at nothing but the reckoning, his backwardness to face which has made the time of settling to be known proverbially as ‘*le quart d’heure de Rabelais*,’ lounged in his easy chair at the Cave Peinte, at Chinon; Cromwell hob-a-nobbed at the Red Lion, in the Strand, with Price and Harrison; Goethe wrote his ballad ‘To the Flea,’ and several of the scenes of ‘Faust,’ at the Auerbach Keller, at Leipzig; Voltaire sipped his wine at the Café Procope; the Abbé Prevost, at a cabaret in the Rue de la Hachette, where he composed his ‘Manon Lescaut;’ and Crebillon, Piron, and Marmontel, at the Cabaret de Landel, in the Rue de Buci.

Can our readers be shocked, after such a muster-roll of dignities and respectabilities, if we ask them to be of the company whilst we join M. Delvan in his peregrinations? If the precedents seem insufficient, they may rest assured that they are not a thousandth part of what might have been quoted to authorize such an excursion as we propose. And, after all, it will not be a long one; although the ground covered will be pretty extensive. On second thoughts, if they like it better, and their consciences and their long skirts are easier for the process, we will bring the tableaux to them as they lightly press the couch or the settee. The mountain shall be brought to Mahomet; for the houris, our readers, shall be accomplished a feat which could not have been performed for an Ishmaelitic prophet.

Behold us, then, let us say rather more than a dozen years ago, at the entrance of the Andler-Keller, in the Rue Hautefeuille, which occu-

pies the site of a by-gone priory of the Prémontrés. The host is a Bavarian—hence the German designation of his house—and is a goodly man of very imposing proportions; round as a barrel, jolly as a tankard, merry with the men, gallant with the ladies—without prejudice, however, to his better-half, a buxom Suisse of Anvers, whose ancestors figure in the ‘Roi Boit’ of Jacques Jordaens, which adorns the collections of the Louvre. We enter, and ensconce ourselves behind a liberal measure of beer; smoke dreamily, and watch the dreamy smoking of other people. Discourse begins, spreads, and becomes general—rather of the Babel order. German philosophy has come in like a flood; and, as Heinrich Heine said nearly twenty years ago, that, as the French had changed the colour of their pantaloons from white to red, so had they engrafted Hengstenberg on Voltaire, and learned to chatter of Kant, Fichté, and Hegel.

It wants still two good hours of midnight, yet Madame Andler shows signs of drowsiness; while Mdlle. Louise imitates her mistress in a corner apart, so far at least as she dares, for her head, as becomes her ancillary position, oscillates with less emphatic, but equally significant nods; the more wide-awake M. Andler meanwhile making, *suo more*, one of a party at piquet. Everybody is speaking, and the scene is animated, perhaps a little irregular and bewildering. Realism, of which M. Courbel is the sovereign pontiff, and M. Champfleury the officiating cardinal, is in the ascendant; and the public of drinkers, divided mainly, as to profession, into students and wood-engravers, are divided philosophically into Realists and non-Realists. It is impossible to follow the order of discourse and argument; but our ears must perforce take in the din of phrases that struggle forth from the lungs of enthusiasts, sceptics, and innovators of every order—apostles of ideas; missionaries of art; friends of progress, of liberty; theologians, metaphysicians, and men of letters; whilst arises above all the jargon, still more uncouth to laymen and

outsiders, of the gentlemen of the long robe.

Hush, babblers! Courbel enters the Brasserie—a word literally signifying brewery, but lending itself, by an elegant metonymy, to the place where beer is sold and consumed. Courbel, as Theophile Souvestre depicts him in his ‘Histoire des Peintres Vivants,’ is a very fine and handsome man of some thirty-six years of age; whose very remarkable figure would appear to have been modelled on an Assyrian *basso-relievo*. His eyes are black and bright, toned down to tenderness by long silky lashes, and shining forth with the softened radiance of those of a gazelle. This is the pontiff of Realism, and all the company suspend their operations to gaze at him. The piquet-players are dumb; the smoke stays in the mouths of the smokers; the billiard-players bring their cues to the salute. He sits—talks awhile; whilst all listen. He retires; and all devote themselves to his anatomy. One wonders at his superb head; another, at his aquiline nose, and his exquisite mouth; a third sets him down for an Assyrian; a fourth for a Spaniard; a fifth for a Venetian; a sixth for an Indian; a seventh for a Byzantian—and each for whatever appears to him most to savour of the noble and *distingué*.

But not play alone, or conversation alone, goes on at the Andler-Keller. It is famous also for its love of song. Staal, the artist, knows a bundle of Swiss and Tyrolese ditties, amongst others the ‘Ranz des Vaches,’ and he sings them, much to the edification of the hostess. On other occasions, Courbel, in his ‘voix besontine, mais agréable,’ chants forth the realism, about which he has just been seriously discoursing, in such pleasant forms as this:—

‘Tous les garçons chantaient,
Le soir au cabaret qu’ils étaient réunis
Tous les garçons chantaient,
Répétant ce refrain :
Tra la la la la, lou lou lou, la,
Tra la la la la, lou lou lou, la,
Trou lou lou lou lou lou,
Le premier qui chanta,
Raconta ses amours,’ &c.

Of all the cafés of Paris, the Café de la Rotonde is, if not the most ancient, at any rate the best known. At first it was called the Café du Caveau, from its situation in a tastefully-arranged souterrain in a garden of the Palais Royal. It is frequented, from one hour of the day to another, by pleasant loungers, habitués of the Opera, and by persons generally who have a sensitive taste in the matter of ices. Not a few literary people repair to it; and its decision, in matters of taste and criticism, is a tribute worth the having. From its verdicts, however, if we may believe the *Correspondance Secrete*, there lies an appeal to the tribunal of Common Sense. About the year 1812, the Café du Caveau became the Café du Perron, when it was raised from its underground position to the ordinary level, an event which followed as a consequence upon some alterations of the Palais Royal. Then it became the Café de la Rotonde—a name which it popularly and persistently retains, in defiance of the alteration of title adopted in celebration of the Treaty of Amiens, and inscribed on its front—Pavillon de la Paix. Some of our readers may recognize it as the place where they were startled from their contemplative smoke, or their first sip of *café noir*, by the deep voice of its celebrated garçon—not the only waiter, they will remember, by a dozen—who gave a cavernous resonance to his enunciation of the *Bon*, which was his benighted way of signalling the more enlightened ‘All right’ of the Britisher. The original *Bon*—of which the present one must ‘pardon us for saying that he is a feeble imitator—called himself Lafont, but was called by everybody else, Lablache, on account of the depth of his voice, which shook the very foundations of the pavilion, as he, in the politest thunder imaginable, demanded ‘Pas d’crème, monsieur?’ In order to economize his voice, of which he was justly proud, Lablache-Lafont exercised his vocation only during the summer half-year, which was sufficiently profitable to justify him in laying up in ordinary during the

winter. An old Marquis, struck by the stentorian ring and power of his organ, interested himself to get its owner entered at the Conservatoire, in order that it might be developed in a higher sphere of art. But at the Conservatoire, Lafont-Lablache either could not or would not do anything at all; and as he had a hankering after the snowy cloth and the table round, he returned to his occupation at the Café de la Rotonde. This ornament of his race survived his intellect, whatever that may have been in quality or quantity, and died demented.

When the wanderer would leave Old Paris, by the ancient barrier Montparnasse, to enter the New, he would find himself in a long, noisy, rambling street, fringed with *guinguettes* and *cabarets* of all sorts, called the Rue de la Gaîté. The street is well named, moralizes M. Delvan, in so far that, from morn to dewy eve, people drink and keep holiday, sing, dance, and enjoy themselves; but not so well named if it be considered for a moment, that just behind the clustering houses of entertainment there is the immense cemetery du Sud, where arrive every hour a pressing crowd of guests who never return, and who are, in fact, in a condition to enjoy only the last long rest of the dead.

What matter! civilized people are not supposed to be anxious about such trifling contrasts. The neighbourhood of the dead gives an edge to the joys of the living—it is the sauce to their ragoûts. If they die, let us be lively; if they sleep, let us be wakeful; if they weep, it is all the more imperative that we should laugh.

Fond Bohemian memories cling to the very names of the Cabarets of the Rue de la Gaîté: the Cabarets de Richelieu and des Deux Edmond, the Café des Mille Colonnes, the Californie; and chiefly and above all, to the Cabaret des Vrais Amis, kept by *la Mère Cadet*, the *personnel* of whose establishment consisted of herself, her husband, of a diminutive female help, and two enormous dogs of different sexes. The *cuisine* here is, or was, of the simplest order—Bifteck aux pommes, potage, bœuf

aux choux, ragoût aux pommes, are its *ne plus ultra* delicacies; and potatoes play a grand part in the roll of Mère Cadet's culinary achievements. In the memory of man, such a thing as a partridge, a quail, a truffle, or an oyster, has not invaded its sacred precincts: and it is a tradition of the house that once, once only, a superb but unwitting wayfarer startled the establishment from roof to basement by ordering a slice of chicken and a bottle of Bourdeaux. To ask for a fowl here were to ask for a sphinx; and in fact the latter might be rather more easily supplied: and Bourdeaux might as well have been Lacryma-Christi, so far as the cellars of the Vrais Amis are concerned.

Mère Cadet's is the great resort of the younger theatrical world, before public favour and high remuneration have called its members out of their chrysalis Bohemian state, to social dignity and responsibility. Ah! to what ecstasies have not these abodes of bliss, the gardens of the Vrais Amis, been witnesses! The air is still languid with the accumulated weight of vows and sighs, of promises and tears, of the eternal constancies of a moment.

Shutting our eyes to the galantries and the pleasantries of the Vrais Amis, we open them upon the picturesque sordidness of the Californie, an immense eating-house, set apart to the refectory of MM. and Mesdames the tag-rag and bob-tail of Paris, and situated between the Boulevard de Vanves and the Chaussée du Maine. The principal refectory is a long and spacious *salle* on the ground-floor, and is celebrated rather for the robustness than the delicacy of its fare. Consumption here is pretty rapid, being at the rate of over 5000 *portions* of beef, veal, and mutton daily, washed down with eight *pièces* of wine—haricots and potatoes in proportion. The prime necessities at La Californie are an empty stomach, a craving appetite, and a stout digestion. With these, and a little money—not much, some eight sous—you have all that is necessary to open up the hospitality of La Californie to the extent of a copious dinner.

Assemble here the choicest ragamuffins of Paris—*malandrins*, *francs-mitoux*, *truands*, *mercelots*, *argotiers*, *sabouleurs*, and other *pratiques* of the nineteenth century. Honest poverty jostles with the scoundrel; the hard-working labourer fraternizes with the vagabond pilferer; the soldier hob-nobs with the chiffonier, the invalide with the drummer of the National Guard, the petty rentier with the cadger, and the vagrant with the lodge-keeper. It is a perfect chaos which cannot recognize itself—a hurly-burly and bluster which cannot hear itself—a vapour that cannot detect itself.

The countenances are as difficult to classify as the costumes; and the language that they speak is of the same level as the 'fricot' which they swallow. Here, amongst other picturesque eccentricities of speech, one may hear a dozen different ways in which the death of any one is announced.—'Il a cassé sa pipe;' 'il a claqué;' 'il a fui;' 'il a perdu le goût du pain;' 'il a avalé sa langue;' 'il s'est habillé de sapin;' 'il a glissé;' 'il a decollé le billard;' 'il a craché son âme,' and so on, *ad libitum*. Montaigne would have delighted in sounds and idioms so racy; liking, as he did, speech that was not too choice and refined, but vehement and brusque, irregular, bold, and soldier-like, rather than pedantic. Montaigne, we say, would have liked the unadorned simplicity of La Californie—or he would not; for ourselves, we see a deal of wisdom in the remark of M. Delvau, that the picturesque has its charms—at a distance.

Nearly allied to La Californie is the Cabaret de Chiffonniers, in the Rue Neuve Saint Médard, in the odoriferous Quartier Mouffetard, a street of the sixteenth century, winding, sordid, wretched, of which all the houses reek with damp and squalor, where all the doors are *borgnes*, and all the windows are stuffed with rags.

Le Café de Foy is one of the most ancient and most illustrious of the Palais Royal. It is historic in its associations and peculiar in its history. It was opened in 1749, by

a retired officer named De Foy, on the first-floor of one of the houses that abut upon the garden, next to the Rue Richelieu. The house, under M. de Foy, had been refused a license for the sale of refreshments; but the beauty of the wife of his successor, Jousseureau, was sufficient to obtain what the interest of the *ancien officier* could not accomplish. The fame of this beauty was so great, that she was known all over Paris as 'La Belle Limonadiere.' This was about the year 1775; and Louis-Philippe-Joseph, Duke of Orleans, having heard of Madame Jousseureau, was naturally inspired with the wish to behold her for himself. He repaired, accordingly, to the Café de Foy, for the ostensible purpose of indulging in the luxury of an ice. Soon he contracted a habit of taking his ices there; not so much as an ultimate object, but as a means to give him the frequent sight of the Patronne and the opportunity of conversing with her. The license which allowed her husband the sale of refreshments in the Grande Allée de Marronniers was not long in coming; and therewith the café descended from its more elevated quarters to the ground-floor.

It is extremely modest, quite quiet, without show or parade. Yet from this pacific retreat stalked forth, armed at all points, like Pallas from the brain of Jove, the Revolution of 1789. This was the manner of it. On the 12th of July in that year, a young man of some seven-and-twenty years of age, a native of Guise, near Vervins, a fellow-pupil with Robespierre at the College Louis-le-Grand, set out from the Café de Foy, in order to harangue the mob which had for some days been assembled tumultuously in the garden planted by the Cardinal Richelieu. The young man's name was Camille Desmoulins. 'It was half-past two o'clock,' says Camille, recording the event, 'and I had just been feeling the pulse of the people. My wrath had given way to despair; for I could not see that the crowds, deeply moved and alarmed as they were, were sufficiently ripe for action. But there were three young

men who appeared animated with the most vehement courage; they held each other by the hand, and I divined that they had sought the Palais Royal for the same purpose as myself. A number of citizens followed them, but without demonstration. "Gentlemen," said I, addressing them, "this is the beginning of an insurrection; one of us must run the risk of mounting on a table to harangue the people." "Do you mount it." "Agreed." Immediately I was rather lifted on to the table than mounted it myself; and no sooner was I there than I was enclosed and surrounded by a dense crowd. I spoke to them, shortly, after this fashion: "Citizens! not a moment is to be lost! I am just arrived from Versailles: M. Neckar is dismissed. This dismissal is the tocsin of a St. Bartholomew of patriots. This very evening all the Swiss and German battalions will march out from the Champ de Mars to devour us! There remains but one resource—to fly to arms, and to adopt cockades by which we may recognize each other."

'I spoke with tears in my eyes, and with an energy and action that it would be impossible for me either to describe or to recal. My motion was received with infinite tokens of applause. I went on. "What colour do you adopt?" One cried, "Choose for us." "Will you have green, the colour of hope; or blue, the colour of American liberty and of democracy?" Voices arose: "Green, the colour of hope." Thereupon I shouted, "Friends, the signal is given. Here are spies and emissaries of the police even now looking me in the face. At least I will not fall into their hands alive." With these words I drew a couple of pistols from my pocket, and with the words, "Let every citizen follow my example," I got down from the table, to be stifled with embraces. Whilst some pressed me to their hearts, others bathed me with their tears. One citizen of Toulouse, fearful for my safety, would by no means have me out of his sight. They brought me a length of green ribbon; I took first a piece for my own hat, and then distributed

it to the people who surrounded me.'

Two days after the Bastille was taken.

La Brasserie des Martyrs is famous for its *Biere de la Baviere, et de Strasbourg*, and for the good taste of its appointments. It ruined its first occupant, Schoen, and made the fortune of M. Bourgeois, his successor: not an unknown circumstance in commercial history for one to sow and another to reap. It is the common meeting-ground of artists and authors, amongst whom there seems to exist a feud as bitter as between the Capulets and the Montagues. As there is nobody so thoroughly anthropophagous as your thoroughly civilised man, it is a blessing that, so far, these two classes have not devoured each other. The roll of the frequenters of the Brasserie, in both kinds, is long and illustrious. As M. Courbel was the great central figure at the Andler-Keller, so here the man who contrived, some seven or eight years ago, most to impress his individuality was M. Fernand Desnoyers, a critic who discovered that Lamartine was an idiot, Alfred de Musset a bungler, Auguste Barbier an epileptic, Victor Hugo a madman; and that in all France, in all Europe, in all the universe, the only poets were Pierre Dupont, G. Mathieu, and *himself*. A further and severer eclecticism would leave himself alone as the proper and unique contemporary representative of the Muses. He is entitled to give himself this prominence, being the author of a farce entitled 'Bras-noir,' and of two or three pieces in verse, upon which he has the happiness of being able to put a singular value.

The literary glories of La Brasserie des Martyrs have somewhat faded, and its splendour is now too much dependent upon certain female martyrs to the evil habits of a not too proper society. The full title of the Brasserie is that of de la Rue des Martyrs, a name which suffices also to indicate its locality.

Le Café de Bruxelles is situated at the corner of the Rue Molière and of the Place de l'Odéon, a situation which gives it favour in the eyes of

the *habitués* of that theatre, and the bachelors of the neighbouring *hôtels garnis*. Here used to come Jean Journet, an apostle of the Phalanstery, who died a few years ago, and had the happiness of receiving a generous eulogium in 'Figaro,' from the pen of M. Nadar, novelist, photographer, and balloonist. When in the full swing of his philanthropic labours, Journet might be seen in the billiard-room of the Café de Bruxelles with a bundle of *brochures* under his arm, which were destined to effect the salvation of the world. Even now he enters, places his bundle on a chair, stretches his hands towards us—very white hands, indeed, they are, and he knows it—and commences to preach. Had he lived at the time of St. John of Constantinople, this man would certainly have contested with the Patriarch the surname of Chrysostom. We are powerfully affected, and the orator, stopping his discourse, advances towards us. 'Will we'—and he offers us a list of names—'Will we kindly inscribe ourselves as *bein-faiteurs de l'humanité*?' We are overcome by his condescension and our own insignificance. 'What good can we do, atoms lost in a world of atoms, without interest, without money?' No matter. 'Only sign;' and his voice is unctuous and irresistible. Our signature is added to his roll; and thus it happens that without wishing it, almost without knowing it, we become one of the fifty or sixty *beinfaiteurs de l'humanité* whose names appear at the head of a *brochure* which advocates the doctrines of the venerable M. Fourier. We ask, with M. Delvau, pardon of an outraged world; and ask, besides, pardon for such an apology, of the illustrious M. Maurice Vigueur, whom we take to be the greatest living luminary and advocate of the Phalanstery. We shall not repeat either offence.

Amongst a dozen *cabarets des Halles* of inferior pretensions there used to be known, five or six years ago, till they attracted the envy of the police, the establishments of MM. Bordier, Baratte, and Paul Niquet. Ostensibly these were for the convenience of the frequenters

of the *Halles*, and of people who came in from the country with supplies; and for their benefit they were allowed to be open all night. It was discovered, however, that they were not used exclusively by the persons for whom they were designed; and on one particular night of a ball at the opera, it was stated by 'Le Droit' that out of six hundred persons who visited these cabarets, there were only about half-a-dozen who had anything to do professionally with the *Halles*. Hereupon they were closed; and it is charitably hoped that the police were right in doing a cruel thing—cruel, because the general and international public found their facilities of intoxication bitterly curtailed thereby. Paul Niquet had inscribed on his sign the following appetising bit of 'brandevinier Anglais':—'On promet à tous les messieurs et autres (gentlemen and others) qui entreront ici, de les rendre morts-ivres (dead drunk) pour deux pence (4 sous). Ils sont prévenus qu'il y a de la paille toute fraîche dans les caves.' Drunkenness and street disorderliness are together reckoned scandalous in our police courts to the extent of five shillings, and perhaps justly so; but drunkenness and the sleep of the just upon straw warranted perfectly clean and fresh—there is a vast difference! When the authorities of Paris, restored to a better frame of mind, rescind the edict that closed the cabaret of M. Paul Niquet, our own countrymen, amongst others, whether dwellers or visitors in Paris, may again become victorious o'er all the ills of life for the moderate charge of two-pence sterling. Baron Haussman, *redde diem!*

Wherever there is a theatre, in Paris as elsewhere, there is pretty sure to be a café or an hotel named after it. The Boulevard du Temple abounds—as indeed what Parisian neighbourhood does not?—with cafés, and amongst and above others is that known as the Café du Cirque, frequented by the actors of all the neighbouring theatres—Folies-Dramatiques, Gaieté, Théâtre-Lyrique, Délassements - Comiques, Folies-

Nouvelles, Funambules, Petit-Lazari et Cirque. Of the actors we single out one for mention—him whose career was sketched in the June number of 'London Society,' now an old man and a comparatively feeble performer. We mean Frédéric Lemaître, once the star of the Paris stage, 'le seul comédien de notre siècle,' who imparted, equally and indifferently, terror to 'Richard d'Arlington,' poetry to 'Ruy Blas,' and pleasantry to 'Robert Macaire.'

There is a tradition of domestic unhappiness of a very pathetic kind connected with one of the cafés of the Boulevard du Temple. The keeper of one of them was cursed with a fair wife and a handsome garçon. One miserable day he had unmistakable proof that the faithfulness of his wife was anything rather than 'above suspicion,' and his estimate of the loyal character of his servant was at the same moment destroyed. His rage and fury knew no bounds; and, too much overcome to murder the rascally garçon on the spot, he gasped out, with all the symptoms of a last, great, concentrated agony, 'Victor, this day week you leave my service!' *Quot mariti, tot sententiae*. In how many ways may not the Nemesis of blighted household bliss be appeased!

The Café Momus, in the Rue des Prêtres-Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, is a café which, some four or five years ago, passed into the hands of a dealer in colours. It was gay and jovial in its café days, and famous as having been the place where the meetings of the geniuses who invented the terms Bohemia and Bohemian came off. Henry Murger, the Murger of Banville's verses on the 'Divan le Peletier,' was at the head of these choice spirits, to whose fellowship he has consecrated a picturesque and feeling poem. Then came Champfleury, who has dedicated several pages of his 'Confessions de Sylvius' to their sayings and doings; Jean Wallon, a philosopher, who so thoroughly betrayed himself as to be familiarly known by that name, and who is the Colline of Henry Murger's romance; Schann, a painter and musician, better known by the name of Schaunard; Privat

d'Anglemont; Adrien Lelioux; Antoine Fauchery; Hippolyte Boillot, the painter; Joannis Guigard, and two or three others.

These illustrious young people are named because to them belong the honour of 'stamping out' the Café Momus. It happened on this wise. They were all poor, and during the severity of winter it became a matter of anxious debate how they were to keep themselves warm. Heavy expenses were out of the question; but by a systematic manœuvre they contrived to get shelter and the semblance of refreshment at the Café Momus, without expending more amongst them all—five or six at a time—than a sum varying from twenty-five centimes to a franc. The disbursements did not satisfy the *cafétier*; but, being an easy-going man, he had not the pluck to remonstrate with customers so ingenious and so formidable. He feared their wit and mischief.

The Bohemians were naturally rather disputatious, given to wrangling and argument, so that the old stagers, quiet frequenters of the house, complained of the annoyance they experienced. Thereupon the Bohemians mounted a story higher, hoping, on their part, to be alone and free to carry on their discussions. Here, however, a sort of society of lawyers' clerks had established themselves, and these soon found all chance of pursuing their stock amusements destroyed by the invaders. Now, the lawyers' clerks spent freely, and the host was obliged, in self-defence, to give orders that the Bohemians should never be served with anything in his house again. The latter took a slight revenge at the moment, and left the house accordingly. They forbore to show themselves for so long a time that Momus was already rejoicing in the happy solution of his difficulty, and in his pacified clientèle of lawyers' clerks. He rejoiced prematurely: for one day M. Champfleury, who tells the story, and was himself a chief character in it, narrates how Momus was paralysed by the sight of half-a-score of his old customers entering his *estaminet* as if nothing had happened.

The *philosopher* also appeared at the same juncture, bringing with him six monthly nurses. 'Allow me to present to you six friends of mine,' said he to the *cafétier*, who was growing more and more uneasy. 'Six nurses!' exclaimed the poor man, stupefied. 'Mesdames, have the goodness to be seated,' said the philosopher.

Some minutes after, Sylvius arrived, followed by six *croque-morts* (men employed as corpse-bearers at funerals). 'Allow me, Momus, to present to you half-a-dozen of my friends.' 'Six *croque-morts*! Surely you wish to compromise my establishment,' said Momus. Then Sylvius: 'Messieurs les Employés des Pompes Funèbres, have the goodness to sit down. Mesdames the nurses, allow us to arrange ourselves so that a nurse and a *croque-mort* may be seated alternately. Momus will preside. It is for his benefit that I have organized this fête. What will you take, my friends?' 'Wine,' was the unanimous response. 'And you, Mesdames the nurses?' 'Wine,' as before. 'Very good. Momus, I have believed you would be rejoiced to entertain these amiable guests. You have had some reason to complain of myself and my friends, and I wish to make it up to you. Will you partake with us?' The *cafétier*, ready to sink into the earth, was speechless. 'Momus,' resumed Sylvius, 'I have brought you a living antithesis. Mesdames les nourrices, that is life; Messieurs les employés des pompes, that is death. The first assist at the début of man, the second at his exit.' He went on further, till both *croque-morts* and nurses lifted up their voices and cried for wine. 'Messieurs les *croque-morts*,' continued Sylvius—'We do not approve of being called *croque-morts*.' 'I recognise your reasonable objection. Messieurs les employés des pompes, do the nurses displease you? Mesdames les nourrices, have you not an affection for these gentlemen?' 'He, he, oh, oh, ho!' from nurses and *croque-morts*, respectively. Sylvius moralised for a couple of minutes, when he was again interrupted by demands for wine. 'Wine,' said the *croque-morts*; 'we want to drink.'

You are fooling us.' 'Wine!' shrieked the nurses.

'My friends,' gravely remonstrated Sylvius, 'you ask for wine. It is a bad thing for you; it stupefies you, and makes you quarrelsome. We have work to do; it is necessary to keep our heads cool and clear. I propose that you partake of the two beverages proper to your professions, beer and milk; but, by way of agreeable change, the *croque-morts* shall drink the milk, and the nurses the beer.' 'No,' responded all alike, 'it is wine we want.'

'Momus,' said Sylvius, 'bring twenty-four bottles of beer, and a dozen of milk.' 'We have no milk here, gentlemen.' 'It can be fetched from the dairy round the corner. But before you go down to get it, Momus, give us all the kiss of peace.' The *cafétier* almost swooned back on to his chair. Meanwhile the language of the nurses and the *croque-morts* was loud and coarse. 'Those of you,' said Sylvius, anxious to

oblige them in any way but their own—'those of you who do not like milk and beer alone had better have them mixed.'

At this moment the garçon appeared with the refreshments that had been ordered. 'Garçon, is the milk warm?' 'Oui, monsieur.' 'Is the beer warm?' The garçon seemed to dream. 'Heat the milk and the beer together in the same vessel,' directed Sylvius. But the *croque-morts* and the nurses threw themselves upon him as one man. His friends hastened to the rescue. A fearful mêlée ensued. The *cafétier* vanished, his hair beginning to show signs of whiteness. Nurses, *croque-morts*, Bohemians, all were mingled in one heaving and involved mass, shrieking, swearing, kicking, scratching, striking. The guard came up to stop the disorder; they arrested Schann, Sylvius, and the *philosopher*. These spent the night in confinement; but next day Momus sold his *estaminet*.

A. H. G.

AN ALDERMAN'S RURAL REVERIES.

RIGHT glad to relinquish the bustle of town
 For the tranquil repose of this sweet rural spot,
 On a soft, mossy bank I sit lazily down,
 And consider what food for reflection I've got.

From yon hawthorn thicket the turtle's soft note
 Entrances my soul as he coos to his mate ;
 I think of the turtle that's tickled my throat,
 The green fat, calipash, calipee that I've ate.

The lambkins at play on the daisy-prankt mead,
 All frisking and running their frolicsome course,
 Remind me of many a glorious feed,
 And an odour steals o'er me—it is of mint sauce.

A brood of young ducks in the water I see;
(That pond's like pea-soup, it's so thick and so green;)
After well-devilled white-bait, as all must agree,
A duckling of Rouen's a dish for the Queen.
What enlivening sounds from the farmyard I hear!
Such a crowing of cocks, such a 'clucking' of hens;
Spring chickens in London are dreadfully dear,
But here I can get them for half the expense.
'Love rules,' says some poet, 'the court, camp, and grove.'
'Love,' 'Grove,'—ah! what visions those words can awaken!
At Grove's I can purchase the fish that I love,
And at Lovegrove's,* my stars! what repasts I have taken!

UP AND DOWN THE LONDON STREETS.

BY MARK LEMON.

CHAPTER VII.

CHURCH CROSS, LONDON, about 1728.

WE will now pass westward through Temple Bar, and as we glance at that erection—a standing proof that threatened buildings, like threatened men, live long—we remember Dr. Johnson and Boswell, and the sly glance at the Jacobite heads then exposed on the Bar, and

the neat application of the classical quotation—'Perhaps our ashes may mingle with theirs'—the old Doctor's Jacobite theories surviving, though his sound good sense made him an eminently practical Loyalist. And now we are—as the beggars well know—out of the jurisdiction

* Mine host of the Artichoke Tavern at Blackwall.

of the City Police, and in the Strand. This, a friend of ours, who writes novels, Mr. Shirley Brooks, declares to be 'the pleasantest and handsomest and most English street in London,' and says that 'to walk the Strand is to obtain a liberal education.' We dare say that many of our young friends would like to be educated upon those easy terms—in the school of Peripatetic Philosophy.

But the Strand was not always handsome and pleasant. It was, in the time of the unfortunate Edward II., merely a road between the two cities, the footway overrun with thickets and bushes, and not paved until great Harry's day, when the owners of the land between Charing Cross and Strand Cross were compelled to make a sound road and

build three bridges—one at Strand Bridge Lane, another at Ivy Bridge Lane, and a third eastward of St. Clement's Church.

The first ascertained inhabitant was Henry III.'s uncle, Peter of Savoy, and the Bishops were the earliest emigrants from the City as building closed up its streets, their sacred calling making them less anxious for the security afforded by the City walls. At the period of the Reformation nine bishops possessed inns, or hostels, by the river side, and all these inns had gardens stretching to the silent highway of the Thames, which was then preferred to the street as a means of transit.

Essex House—so named from Elizabeth's favourite (Essex Street and Devereux Court mark the site)—had been the town-house of the

ARUNDEL HOUSE, STRAND, LONDON. (From an Old Print.)

see of Exeter, and passed from Dudley Earl of Leicester to Essex, the liberal friend of Spenser—

'He oft gained gifts and goodly grace
Of that great Lord.'

The story of the rebellious, headstrong, and ungrateful Essex is too well known to be repeated now, and we will only remind you that he came hither determined to die rather than be taken. A great force soon hemmed him in, and planted artillery against the house—one piece on the tower of St. Clement's Church. The result you know. Essex and his friend Southampton were sent to the Tower, to be tried and suffer death on the morning of Ash Wednesday, Raleigh looking on from a window of the Armoury. Essex's son, the Parliamentary general, was

born here. A pair of fine large pillars, perhaps belonging to the water-gate, are all that now remain of Essex House.

In the next great house in the Strand, Arundel House, died the Countess of Nottingham, who received (by the mistake of the lad who conveyed it) the ring Essex sent to Elizabeth. The Admiral forbade its delivery to the Queen, and when the Countess on her death-bed made this discovery, and begged the Queen's forgiveness, says Dr. Birch, 'her Majesty answered, "God may forgive you, I never can!" and left the room with great emotion. The Queen was so struck with the story that she never went into bed nor took sustenance from that instant, but lay upon the carpet with cushions around her, in the

profoundest melancholy. Elizabeth died on the 24th of March, three days after the funeral of the Countess had been kept at Chelsea.' So ends the story, which we were bound to tell you; but are equally bound to add that historians, who do not copy everything set down by their predecessors, disbelieve the whole of it.

Arundel House was sold by Edward VI. to Henry Seymour, during whose possession strange intrigues and dalliances are recorded, and in which the Princess Elizabeth figures, it is said, somewhat equivocally. Seymour married Queen-Dowager Catherine—the last wife of Henry VIII.; she was said to have died the next year of poison. But ignorant and excited people, even in these days, are apt to imagine such things without reason, as we have heard some few years ago in the case of the series of royal deaths in Portugal. Elizabeth is thought to have liked Seymour, but his treasonable practices sadly interfered with his love affairs, and, in fact, brought him to the block. The house was bought by the Earl of Arundel, and passed in succession to Thomas Howard, who adorned it with works of art, both of sculpture and painting—willing, according to Clarendon, 'to be thought a scholar; whereas to all parts of learning he was almost illiterate, and much disposed to levity and delights which, indeed, were very despicable and childish.' He made a magnificent collection of marbles, however; and Clarendon had the happy faculty of saying very unpleasant things about people he disliked, and he disliked a good many people.

At the house of Lady Primrose, in Essex Street, the Young Pretender paid his secret visit to London, in 1750; and Flora Macdonald found refuge there. At the Essex Head Dr. Johnson established a club, which Boswell and others continued eight years after the doctor's death.

In Norfolk Street lodged Peter the Great when visited by King William, and Peter returned the visit, going in a hackney-coach, and probably having a brandy-bottle with him. Peter was a great man, and a great savage. You may place

to which side of the account you like his disgust at the number of lawyers in Westminster Hall, and his statement that in Russia he had but two, and meant to hang one of them when he got back.

In Norfolk Street lived Mr. Shippen, the Jacobite, who was sent to the Tower by George I. for saying 'the only infelicity of his Majesty's reign is his ignorance of our language and constitution'—rather serious deficiencies. Walpole said of him: 'I will not say who are corrupt; but I will say who was not corruptible—that man was Shippen.'

Old Somerset House was built by Protector Somerset, brother of Queen Jane Seymour, and uncle to Edward VI. The great cloister on the north side of Old St. Paul's, and which contained the grim and celebrated 'Dance of Death,' was demolished to find stone for the building, and besides the Bishop's Inn, the church of St. John of Jerusalem at Clerkenwell was pulled down to make space for it and its gardens. The Protector was beheaded in 1552, and did not see the completion of the building on which he had expended about 50,000*l.* of our money.

Queen Elizabeth granted the keeping of Somerset House to her cousin, honest Lord Hunsdon, to whom she offered on his death-bed what she had before refused, the Earldom of Wiltshire. 'Madam,' said he, 'seeing you counted me not worthy of this honour while I was living, I count myself unworthy of it now I am dying.' Elizabeth went hence to open the Royal Exchange. Charles I. assigned Somerset House to Henrietta Maria, and Inigo Jones erected a chapel for her. A few tombs of her Roman Catholic attendants are built into the cellars under the great square of the present building. During the Christmas festivities the Queen took part in a masque, and Prynne's 'Histriomastix' appeared the next day with a marginal note (too coarse to repeat, and which was declared to reflect on her Majesty), for which he, Prynne, lost his ears. From Somerset House Charles I. expelled Henrietta's foreign courtiers and household, after the Queen had torn the hair from her head in

a rage, and cut her hands by dashing them through glass windows. It required four days and nearly forty carriages to transport the expelled foreigners to Dover.

Oliver Cromwell's body here lay in state, and which 'folly and profusion so far provoked the people, that they threw dirt on the escutcheon placed over the gate of Somerset

House.' The funeral cost about 28,000*l.*, but with this Cromwell could have had nothing to do, and so the live asses kicked at the dead lion. It was once said that Cromwell's final resting-place was in Red Lion Square, under a stone obelisk which formerly stood in the centre of that out-of-the-world place.

When Henrietta Maria bade fare-

THE STRAND, LONDON, FROM ARUNDEL HOUSE, 1700.

well to England, Catherine of Braganza succeeded her. Poets welcomed her, but we do not know whether any of them equalled an Irish poet of our own age, who, saluting a Portuguese visitor, began,

'Princely offspring of Braganza,
Erin greets thee with a stanza.'

Here Monk lay in state, and here the Protestant martyr, Sir Edmund

Berry Godfrey, is said to have been murdered, and his body afterwards taken to a field near Primrose Hill.

From the time of Catherine of Braganza, Somerset House was the nominal jointure of our queens, and many of the apartments were given to the poorer nobility. Walpole and Mrs. Montague have left accounts of an entertainment given here to George II. and the Princess Augusta.

The King wore an old-fashioned habit, and was so well disguised that 'some one asked him to hold their cup,' no doubt taking him for

a greengrocer of the period. The Duke of Cumberland looked like Cockofogo, the drunken captain in 'Rule a Wife and Have a Wife.'

Old Somerset House, London.

The Duchess of Richmond was a Lady Mayoress, Lord Delaware Queen Elizabeth's Porter, Mr. Conway Don Quixote; his sister,

'Poor Jenny Conway,
She drank lemonade
At this masquerade,'

and was killed by the draught. The

beautiful Miss Chudleigh, afterwards the notorious Duchess of Kingston, appeared in such a remarkable 'no-costume,' that the Princess of Wales publicly threw a veil over her.

When these apartments were visited by Sir William Chambers, preparatory to the erection of the present building, he walked through rooms where foot had not intruded for nearly a hundred years, amid mouldering walls, broken casements, crumbling roofs, and decaying furniture. In one the chandelier still hung from the ceiling, and velvet curtains, tawny with age, fringed with a few shreds of gold and spangles, hung in tatters. In another were articles of different ages—broken couches and tattered hangings, screens, sconces, and fire-dogs, and the vestiges of a throne. What a bogified place it must have been! Quite a Valhalla for the Spirit-rappers.

Old Somerset House was pulled down, and the present building erected in its place. The terrace elevation was made in expectation of the embankment of the Thames—not more than eighty years ago! Mr. Smiles narrates that Telford, the great engineer, passing over Waterloo Bridge with a friend, pointed to some finely-cut stones on the corner nearest the bridge. 'You see those stones there. Forty years since I hewed and laid them, when working on that building as a common mason.'

The Royal Academy Exhibition was held here until its removal to the National Gallery—with which, as the late Sir Robert Peel said, we had helped to spoil the finest square in Europe. Many of you (gentlemen, of course) must remember the old Torus and the big Farnese Hercules in the wire cage at the bottom of the stairs.

In Craven Street lived James Smith, one of the authors of 'Rejected Addresses.'

In James I.'s time London had grown great westward; and on the site of the present Adelphi a New Exchange or Britain's Bourse was opened, but failed to rival its royal namesake in the old London city. The new Exchange became a Bazaar,

and the most fashionable lounge in Westminster, after the Restoration, and many of the dramatists of the day have laid scenes of intrigue in the galleries of the New Exchange. The city merchants' wives and daughters came hither to ape the manners of the quality, and country ladies eagerly sought for lodgings near it, that they might 'stand glaring in balconies and staring out of window.' The walks formed a favourite promenade with the fops about town, and who came here to show their clothes and chat with the stall-keepers.

The Duchess of Albemarle, when the wife of Thomas Radford, here sold wash-balls, powder, and gloves, and when touting her wares—'Choice of fine essences, sir. Very good wash-balls, sir' (as was the custom)—no doubt attracted the attention of General Monk.

The Duchess of Tyrconnel, known as the 'White Widow,' hired a stall and sold haberdashery. She wore a white dress, wrapping her whole person, and a white mask, which she never removed, and excited much interest and curiosity (Walpole).

Some twenty years ago, a lady clothed entirely in white, shoes and all, used to walk the streets of London. We never could learn her story. The black lady, whom many may remember haunting the Bank of England, was said to have been the sister of a clerk hung for forgery, and that she always carried the fatal pen with which the crime had been committed in her girdle.

The old Savoy Palace was named after its founder, Peter, Earl of Savoy, and John, King of France, was confined there after the battle of Poitiers; and there he died, when he honourably returned from France, unable to procure his ransom. Old John of Gaunt, 'time-honoured Lancaster,' held possession when Wat Tyler's mob burnt the Savoy about his ears; and the palace remained in partial ruins until Henry VII. endowed it as a hospital for one hundred poor persons, and dedicated it to St. John the Baptist. At the suppression of the hospital, its beds and furniture were given to St. Thomas and Bridewell hospitals.

The Savoy fell into disrepute; and Queen Elizabeth, when taking the air, was assailed by its evil people. Warrants were issued in vain against these rogues; and a person demanding a debt due to him of another in the Savoy sanctuary was dipped in tar, rolled in feathers, carried in a wheelbarrow, and bound to the Maypole in the Strand—rather a bold plea to an action for debt, and worthy of the Kentucky man, whose answer to a dishonoured bill was that he was a citizen of the wilds, and his home was in the setting sun. Samuel Foote considered ‘tar and feathers a very genteel dress, as it fitted close to the skin and kept out the rain.’ After the Restoration, the Commissioners for the Revision of the Liturgy met here, and were called the Savoy Conference. That eminent religionist, Charles II., established a French church here. The Great Hall was, after a while, divided into several apartments, and deserters, men pressed for military service, Dutch recruits, and the sick and wounded, were lodged in the Savoy. Marriages were advertised to be performed here, and a true register kept, for a guinea, stamp included. But time and neglect swept down what remained of the old Palace, and the builders of Waterloo Bridge carried away the rubbish. The little chapel, built in 1505, remained until destroyed by fire in 1864—its churchyard a model of tidiness and reverent care. It had a most interesting monument within, that of Anne Killegrew, the painter and poet:—

‘Such noble vigour did her verse adorn,
That it seemed borrowed where ’twas only
born,
Unmixed with foreign filth and undefiled,
Her worth was more than man—her innocence
a child.’

The great Lord Burleigh, and his son after him, had a house in the Strand, where we dare say the former often shook his paternal head at the latter, after the manner of his representative in the ‘Critic.’ Elizabeth paid him a visit, and when entering, the Chamberlain pointed out the lowness of the threshold. ‘For your master’s sake,’ she said, ‘I will stoop, though I would not for the King of Spain.’ The Royal lady once told

Burleigh, when he could not rise to receive her, ‘My lord, we make use of you not for the badness of your legs, but for the goodness of your head.’

A house belonging to the see of Carlisle stood on the site of Beaufort Buildings, and, passing at the Reformation to the Bedford family, became Russell House, until the building of Bedford House on the site of the present Southampton Street. The Chancellor Clarendon occupied this house until the completion of his new house in Piccadilly; and here, on the 3rd of September, 1660, between eleven and two at night, the Duke of York married Anne Hyde, the Chancellor’s daughter.

Salisbury House stood on the site of Salisbury and Cecil Streets, and was built by Sir R. Cecil. Queen Elizabeth was present at the housewarming.

York House belonged to the Archbishop of York in the time of Queen Mary. Here the great Lord Bacon was born, and when a boy played in St. James’s Fields, where the echo of a brick conduit attracted the infant philosopher, and made him seek out the cause. At York House he kept his sixtieth birthday, and there desired to die; ‘for York House,’ he said, ‘is the house where my father died, and where I first breathed, and where I will yield my last breath, if it so please God and the king.’ But the Great Seal was taken from him, and he returned to York House no more, being forbidden to come within the verge of the court. The Duke of Buckingham obtained the grant of York House from James I., and erected the rustic water-gate still standing. The House was leased to the Duke of Northumberland in 1628, and contained a fine collection of pictures and sculptures. The ‘superstitious’ pictures were sold by order of Parliament, and the house given by Cromwell to General Fairfax, whose daughter married George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham,

‘Who, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in
thinking.’

The Duke resided here after the Restoration, and subsequently sold the mansion for 3000*l.*, when it was pulled down, and George Street, Villiers Street, Duke Street, Of Alley, and Buckingham Street, were erected.

Suffolk House—known to us as Northumberland House—named after the Earl of Suffolk (father of the memorable Frances, Countess of Essex and Somerset), was so called until it passed by marriage to the tenth Earl of Northumberland. At his death it devolved on Elizabeth Percy, whose first husband, Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle, died when she was very young. Her second husband, Mr. Thomas Thynne, was shot in his coach in Pall Mall one Sunday, in 1682, and in Westminster is a ludicrously accurate group in marble, representing the deed. Her third husband—married in the May of the following year—was the proud Duke of Somerset. The fortunate lady, therefore, had three husbands before she was eighteen. The house was formerly three sides of a quadrangle; the principal front was to the Strand, with gardens and water-gate towards the Thames.

In Northumberland Court Nelson lodged; and if his gallant spirit ever visits the glimpses of the moon, we wonder what he thinks of Trafalgar Square, with his own unfinished column, and the ridiculous water-squirts called fountains.

In Hartshorne Lane Ben Jonson lived, when he went to a private school in St. Martin's Church, before he became a Westminster boy, under Camden, to whom he addresses a grateful and graceful epigram.*

* As the workmen in September, 1823, were excavating a vault to receive the remains of the lady of Sir Robert Wilson, in the north aisle of Westminster Abbey, they discovered, at the head of it, a leaden coffin placed in the ground perpendicularly, with the head downwards in a hole about two feet square. At the top of the hole was a square stone about eighteen inches wide, on which were the initials 'B. J.,' cut in characters rather illegible. On inquiry amongst the old men of the Abbey, they stated that the tradition is, that when Ben Jonson was seriously ill, he was asked where he would be buried. He said, 'If I can get foot ground in Westminster Abbey I will be interred there:' and on the Dean of

Let us now return to Temple Bar, in order to notice the right-hand side of the Strand. We will not say anything about the barber's shop in that side of the Bar, except that it used to excite the loyal animadversion of our friend the late Mr. Gilbert A'Beckett, who would always affect apprehensions lest the gates of Temple Bar should prove ineffective at keeping out an invading army, because the army might bolt in through the barber's. The London barbers, by the by, were a very important body at one time, when they were designated barber surgeons, and when close shaving was the fashion with others than the cheap haberdashers (who only tried to 'shave the ladies'), and the barber's pole indicated that you could be bled with the lancet as well as the razor. This privilege was taken away in 1745 by Act of Parliament. To attract customers, one exhibited a short-bladed instrument as the dagger with which Walworth killed Wat Tyler, and another wrote over his door—

'Rove not from pole to pole, but here turn in,
Where naught exceeds the shaving but the gin.'

On our right hand stood until very lately the last of the Bulk Shops of the Strand, and forming part of Butchers' Row. In this house had resided generations of fishmongers, the last being Crockford—or Old Crocky—the notorious gambling-house keeper. We were told by one who knew him that it was his custom to risk the loss only of a certain sum; when that was gone, he would leave the table and go home. If he won a certain amount he would retire from the play, go home, drop his winnings down his own area, and then return to see what more Fortune had in store for him. When he became rich he would not allow the old shop to be altered, possibly that it might remind him of the days of his innocence, when he sold other

Westminster being applied to, he gave sufficient ground to admit the corpse in a perpendicular position, as it was found. The skeleton of the deceased was entire, and in a singular state of preservation.

fish than flat fish. Butchers' Row ran from Temple Bar to St. Clement's, and was granted by Edward I. as

shambles for 'foreign' (i. e. country) butchers. Houses of wood and plaster succeeded, and one was inhabited,

BOSLINGTON HOUSE, PROBABLY, LONDON, IN 1780.

in James I.'s time, by the French Ambassador, and for one night by the Duc de Sully. Catesby, Wright, Winter, and Guy Fawkes met at a house in Butchers' Row, and administered the oath of secrecy to the conspirators, and afterwards received

the sacrament in the next room, although the plot is said to have been concocted at the Old King's Head, in Leadenhall Street. Guy Fawkes has been lately said to be the first person who missed a Parliamentary train. Doctor Johnson

'used' a dining-house in this row—Clifton's. Butchers' Row is now Pickett Street and Pickett Place.

Clement's Inn, where Justice Shallow—

'No such swinge-buckler in the Halls of Court again'—

ate his terms and heard the chimes at midnight with Jack Falstaff, is here at hand. The Inn is named from the well of St. Clement's; and St. Clement's Danes was a burial-place of Harold's followers, it is said.

In Clement's Inn is a blackamoor, supporting a dial, presented by Clare, Lord of the adjoining market. We are almost ashamed to quote anything more against the lawyers, for all whom we have known have been very good fellows; but the lines once attached to Blackey are worth recalling:—

'From cannibals thou fledst in vain:
Lawyers less quarter give.
The first won't eat you when you're slain,
The last will while you live.'

In the church in the Strand Dr. Johnson was a constant attendant, and a brass tablet recording the fact is attached to the pillar beside which he sat. The old Angel Inn—now St. Clement's Chambers—existed a very few years ago, and had its galleries and gable-ends and large court-yard. There, when the Angel Inn stood in the Fields, was Bishop Hooper, the Protestant martyr, taken before it was light, on his way to Gloucester, where he was burnt.

Let us pass on to the *via de Aldwych*, or Wych Street, where some of the oldest houses in London are to be seen. New Inn, on the right, was the site of a guest inn about Henry VII.'s time, and had as a sign the Virgin Mary, and hence was called Our Lady's Inn, until it went into the law. In Edward VI.'s time it became a resort for law-students, and Sir Thomas More studied there before he was entered at Lincoln's Inn. It is said to be haunted, but the only spirits we have ever seen there were raised by the hospitality of literary friends. Drury House stood on its own grounds in

Drury Lane in Elizabeth's time, and Lord Craven, the hero of Creutznach, built Craven House, the site of which was bought by Philip Astley, in 1803, for his Olympic pavilion, constructed principally of old ship-timber, given to him by favour of the Duke of York; and we remember two topmasts supporting the proscenium of the old theatre, when Liston, Farren, Keeley, and Vestris trod the deck, and until it was destroyed by fire in 1859.

In Craven Buildings lived Mrs. Bracegirdle and Mrs. Pritchard, the celebrated actresses, and Dr. Arne composed the music to 'Comus' in the back parlour of No. 17; and opposite Craven Buildings is one of the few panelled houses still existing. The Cock and Magpie is next door, and Turpin is said to have there shot Tom King, when endeavouring to rescue him, as you may read in Mr. Harrison Ainsworth. It was also patronized, according to that celebrated biography of elevated characters, the 'Newgate Calendar,' by the notorious Sixteen-stringed Jack, so named from wearing that number of strings to the knees of his breeches.

Drury Lane was nobly tenanted until late in the seventeenth century. Pit Place was the site of the Cock Pit, and afterwards of the first Drury Lane Theatre.

In the Coal Yard, at Drury Lane end, was born Nell Gwynn. She lodged afterwards at Maypole Lane (now Little Drury Lane), and there on the 1st of May, 1667, when Mr. Pepys was on his way to Westminster, 'meeting many milkmaids with garlands upon their pails, dancing with a fiddler before them, did he see pretty Nelly standing at her lodging door, in her smock sleeves and bodice, looking upon one.' She seemed a mighty pretty creature to the susceptible Samuel.

This celebrated woman possessed great interest with Charles II., and used it generously. Her origin and progress is sufficiently known; but the English people have always entertained a peculiar liking for Nell Gwynn, as they have for Robin Hood and Maid Marian, and one or two other questionable moralists.

She is said to have suggested the foundation of Chelsea Hospital, and the benevolence of her character makes the story probable. Lord Buckhurst, who knew her well, says: 'All hearts fall a-leaping wherever she comes.' The good Archbishop Tenison preached her funeral sermon, and Mr. Peter Cunningham has written her story.

At the corner of Maypole Lane

and the Strand was the blacksmith's forge of the father of Nan Charles, afterwards Duchess of Albemarle. Opposite was the maypole, said to have been set up by the old blacksmith to celebrate his daughter's good fortune.

The famous Maypole in the Strand was returned to its place with great pomp and rejoicing, the former one having been removed by order of

KILTER CHARGE, STRAND, LONDON, 1629.

the Parliamentarians, in 1644. In a rare tract, called 'The Citty's Loyaltie Displayed,' published at the time, it appears the new pole was two pieces of cedar, and when united one hundred and thirty feet long. It was conveyed from Scotland Yard (so called because the Scotch Kings lodged there) to the Strand, with the beating of drums and the sound of merry music. The Duke of York sent twelve seamen with cables and pulleys, and six great anchors to

assist in raising it; and after them came three men, bareheaded, carrying three crowns. The pieces were then joined together, and hooped with bands of iron, with crowns and the King's arms richly gilt. A party of morris dancers in half shirts, with a pipe and tabor, danced round the pole; then the drums beat and the trumpets sounded, and the Strand resounded with the shouts of the assembled multitude. In 1713, however, it became decayed,

and a new one was set up, richly decorated. This was taken down when the new church was built, and the parish presented the maypole to Sir Isaac Newton, who gave it to the Rector of Wanstead, to support the then largest telescope in Europe.

Here was the first stand for hackney-coaches, in 1634. One Captain Bailey having appointed four to stand there, others soon joined them, until there were actually as many as twenty. They were not called so from Hackney, but from a French word, *coche-à-la-haquerie*. Dreadful things they were, and, O young

ladies, whose mammae do not keep carriages, be thankful that you have not to go to parties—or to improving lectures—in such vehicles. Sheridan was very right when he paid the driver of one with a bad shilling. 'Sir, this here's a bad shilling,' said the man. 'All right, this here's a bad coach,' said Sheridan.

The cabriolet (or *vulgo*, cab) was introduced in 1823, and has driven the poor old 'Jarvey' (also *vulgo* for hackney-coach) from the streets. We believe there is a No. One 'left blooming alone,' but the cabs now amount to above 6000.

COVERT GARDEN, LONDON. (From a Print by Hollar.)

The Holy Well in the Strand was once frequented for its sweet waters, which still flowed as bright and pure, when covered over by the Old Dog Tavern and surrounded by some of the worst dens of London, stored with the foulest moral pollution, happily removed very recently. There was once an hostelry with the sign of a Lyon, until Henry VIII., when it became an Inn of Chancery and an entrance to Lyon's Inn, itself the dreariest place we knew, long haunted, no doubt, by the ghost of Mr. William Ware, who

left there with Thurtell to be murdered at Elstree.

Passing onward, we should have found Wimbledon House, on the site of which stood Doyley's warehouse, where Steele and Gay had their Doyley suite, and the little wine-glass napkins had their origin and name. Without Mr. Doyley's ingenious invention of cheap stuffs, Mr. Spectator thinks we should not have been able to have carried on the war.

In Exeter Street, Dr. Johnson, when he first came to London, lodged

and dined for 4½d. a day at a stay-maker's, he and Garrick having borrowed 5l. on their joint note from Mr. Wilcox, the bookseller. Is it wonderful that the sturdy old Barn had little sympathy for the distresses of affectation?

In 1670 Exeter Change was built, and a Dr. Burbon, a little later, opened a sort of Bazaar. We remember the common footway through it, and the milliners', hosiers', cutlers', and toy shops on each side. One Thomas Clarke began business there with 100l., and realized a fortune of nearly half a

million; and had his portrait, looking out of the window of a cottage, painted on the wall. His daughter married Mr. Hamlet, the celebrated jeweller. Mr. Clarke once gave the writer a glass of wine, and did not leave him a legacy. Over the Bazaar was the world-famous wild-beast show, with a big beefeater at the door, and against the wall a great picture of all the animals. It was the grand joy of a boy's holiday to go there and see the elephant stamp the mangel-wurzel to pieces, and take a halfpenny out of an iron box. The animals at the Zoological are

COVENT GARDEN MARKET, LONDON. (FROM AN OLD PRINT.)

too genteel for such practices. One distinguished individual created a great noise at his death, for he was shot by a file of soldiers. That was Chumee, the great elephant. His death is a most affecting story, and his skeleton is now at the College of Surgeons.

Chumee once appeared at Drury Lane in a pantomime, to the great disgust of the property-man of the rival theatre, who said:

'I should be very sorry if I couldn't make a better elephant than *that*.'

The map of 1563 shows how thinly scattered were the houses

along the Strand of Elizabeth; there appears to have been one continuous row of houses and gardens from Drury Lane on to St. Martin's Lane, leaving Covent Garden quite an open space, with a residence possibly for the Sumpnour of Westminster Abbey, whose garden it was. At present our destination is old Whitehall and Westminster, merely looking up St. Martin's Lane as we pass. It was first named Westchurch Lane, and among its distinguished inhabitants were Suckling, the poet, and Sir Kenelm Digby, the gentleman who had a naughty but beautiful wife, for

whom he was always inventing cosmetics—one of them was viper-soup. Later, the great Lord Shaftesbury, Dr. Tenison (he that preached Neil Gwynn's funeral sermon), and Ambrose Phillips. Sir Joshua Reynolds lived opposite May's Buildings, as did Sir James Thornhill, when he created the Artists' School, in St. Peter's Court, and which Hogarth afterwards established as the Society of Incorporated Artists—the origin of the Royal Academy. Ronbillac and Fuseli lived in St. Martin's Lane; and the Old Slaughter's Coffee House (now pulled down) was long the resort of artists.

Between St. Martin's Lane and Hedge Lane stood the Royal Mews, where the falcons of the sovereigns were kept as early as 1319, and Chaucer was one of the clerks

thereof. When the royal stables at Lomesbury, or Bloomsbury, were destroyed, the hawks were removed from Charing Cross, and new stabling built for the king's horses. Most London stables are called *mews*—from this cause, and not, as generally supposed, from stable-yards being favourite promenades of musical cats. There really have been musical cats—in Paris, where trained cats were placed in a row, and, according as a monkey beat time, they mewed; and it is recounted that 'the diversity of tones produced a very ludicrous effect.'

So much for the Strand; and we hope that the progress we have made in a liberal education affords us satisfaction.

Drawn by T. S. Beconabe.]

ON THE STAIRS.

[See Page 70.]

ON THE STAIRS.

(WITH AN ILLUSTRATION.)

AWAY from the lights and the dancers—
 Away from the heat and the crowd :
 Let us talk where our questions and answers
 Need scarcely be uttered aloud.
 A question may well be unmeaning—
 An answer may well be absurd—
 When some crash of the waltz intervening
 Leaves question and answer unheard.

Permit me to try and contrive you
 A little settee on the stair ;
 I imagine the change will revive you—
 (The warmth was oppressive *in there*).
 These parties are tiring—oh, *very* !—
 In June. May I fetch you an ice ?
 Will you try lemonade, then, or sherry ?
 What, nothing ?—*Do* take my advice.

This news from abroad is alarming ;—
 You've seen the 'Pall-Mall' of to-day ?—
 Oh, Ilma de Murska was charming
 To-night in the 'Flauto,' they say.
 Not a ghost of a chance for the Tories,
 In spite of Adullam and Lowe.
 By-the-by, have you heard the queer stories
 Of Overend, Gurney and Co. ?

I fear that the Drama's declining ;
 There's nothing just now to be seen.
 What a singular fancy for Vining
 To pitch upon Cardinal Kean !
 I hear the Commission is ended—
 The Music-Hall question, you know.
 As a matter of course you attended
 The late Horticultural Show ?

Well, the best of the season is over,—
 'Twill be a relief, I declare,
 To hurry to Folkestone or Dover
En route for—one doesn't mind *where* !
 I started last year, I remember,
 Some weeks before Fashion took flight ;
 Then—just at the end of September—
 Your carriage *already* ?—Good-night !

CAUGHT AT LAST.

'WHAT'S in a name?' asks the poet—'a rose by any other name,' &c.; and yet, there has been a difference of opinion on the subject. Jonathan Bugg thought he should smell sweeter as Norfolk Howard; while as for myself—the humble writer of this story—I attribute the greatest misfortune of my life, by a roundabout way of reasoning, to being called 'Johnny.' My name has always been 'Johnny,' and I think my nature, so to speak, gradually grew Johnnish; for didn't every 'Jack' of my boyish days naturally hold a high hand over a Johnny? Petticoat government was the absolute monarchy by which I was governed. My father died before I could lisp; and my mother (with the best of intentions, doubtless), had old-established rules on the subject of education. Dr. Watts was her demigod; and though, in the primeval times in which that gentleman lived, when the rose was 'the glory of April and May!' he may have served as a sort of forcing-box for the young, yet now-a-days nature grows better by itself, even though the roses are delayed till June. 'Train up a child in the way he should go,' says the wisest of men. Here again my mother thought she understood the wisest of men thoroughly; only unfortunately her idea of the way to be gone in was so narrow, that it was a moral impossibility for any one to walk in it. My early youth, therefore, was a series of deviations from, and draggings back into my mother's 'way,'—she vigorously compressing her petticoats, lest in getting me back she should wander a step out of it herself. Birds'-nesting was not in this way—indeed it would be easier to say what was not in it than what was, it being a path of the barest. I only say this to show the system on which I was nourished, and by which I came through my college career (at St. Bees) in my mother's eyes—triumphant.

I was ordained, and was going down to my first curacy in a small country village, where my mother

thought I should encounter fewer of those snares she dreaded for me than in a town.

'Good-bye, my dear boy!' said she, with a tear in each eye. 'I shall come and see you by-and-by. Heaven bless you!—and do see that the sheets are aired.'

This was pleasant. My hat-box was inside the carriage, which contained both a young and old lady; my foot on the step.

My mother, in losing me, lost all consciousness of any one else the train might hold. I blushed to my hair, stumbled over my hat-box, and felt in the first stage of infancy as the train moved on with me to my first curacy.

It was not till some stations had been passed that I glanced up at my travelling companions.

I had had a vague consciousness of the young lady suppressing a laugh as I entered, that was all.

Still I *was* a man, though shy and nervous; so I looked at the young one first. A pretty girl, with golden hair knotted up under a small round hat, that my mother would have condemned at once as unfeminine—and yet the small, rather pouting mouth, was very womanly. She looked alive for amusement, and dissatisfied with her materials.

Leaving myself out of the question, the materials weren't promising. Her companion was a tall, gaunt, bony woman, with a severe expression. Her eyes were closed, and on her knee there rested a speaking-trumpet. After looking, there seemed nothing more for me to do, and I turned my eyes upon the fields and trees we were passing. The young lady, however, was of the opinion that as Mahomet would not go to the mountain, as was natural, the mountain *could* go to Mahomet.

'Would you like to see "Punch"?' she asked; and, though I doubted the propriety of the proceeding with our chaperon asleep, and thought the mice disposed to play too much, with the cat away, yet I

apartment, and added it to the half that was in, and said—

‘Mr. Williams, I believe, *vice* Parker, resigned.—I’m Parker. Mrs. Spinx, I will see you presently.’

That lady, in a state of unwillingness, left us, and left me in a state of mild astonishment. I had a great respect for ‘the cloth,’ and this ‘mixture’ shocked me.

‘When one puts off one’s shoes, one likes to see how they will fit another man,’ said Mr. Parker; ‘besides which, there is a trifle I wish to settle with you. Shall we do the business first, and smoke a pipe together afterwards?’

(I told Mr. Parker, as I had told Miss Lizzie about the croquet—I never smoked.)

‘And yet you exist!—excuse me; well, then, I’ll smoke the two pipes afterwards. Mr. Williams, you observe this apartment?’

I assented (did he think I looked blind?)

‘Neat but not gaudy, eh?’ pursued the ‘last.’

I assented again.

‘Glad you like it. Well, this room belongs to Mrs. Spinx; but the furniture—at least one or two things—belongs to me.’

‘The rooms were *said* to be furnished in the letters my mother received,’ I gently remarked.

‘Probably. Mrs. Spinx said so, now, didn’t she?’

She did: would he, therefore, tell me which were Mrs. Spinx’s things and which were his?

Mr. Parker looked very doubtful; went to a coal-pan and a small deal table with plants on it, and said, ‘Mrs. Spinx; the one or two other things,’ he concluded, ‘are mine.’

‘But,’ I exclaimed, ‘a man could not live in a room with nothing but a deal table and a coal-pan; where could he sit?’

‘Very true,’ said Mr. Parker. ‘I believe, by-the-way, there was an article Mrs. Spinx *called* a chair when I came, but—’ (Mr. Parker shrugged his shoulders) ‘in the words of the poet, “it was harder than I could bear.” Accordingly I did not pack the furniture, supposing you would wish to take it.’

I looked at the easy-chairs, and

sniffed just a little: it did seem hard that I should have Mr. Parker’s tobacco-infected room imputed to me.’

‘Is it the baccy you don’t like?—a little camphor will soon take that out. You see, my good fellow, I’m off to-night to visit my lady-love, who disports on the moors at this time of the year, and I thought these chairs would be more in your way than in mine—they would be too much in mine! I’m no Jew; so suppose we say 30*l.*, and have done with the subject.’

Of course I bought everything. And then while Mr. Parker smoked his two pipes, waiting for his train, he was in evidently good spirits and friendly towards me.

‘You’ll find this place beastly slow,’ he said.

It did not seem unlikely that what would be Mr. Parker’s poison would be my meat. He would not have survived life at my mother’s. The word ‘beastly’ itself was, to say the least, eminently unclerical, so the remark did not depress me. I therefore made an inquiry about my vicar.

‘The old humbug!’ burst out the last curate.

I felt my blood curdle—all my old early-trained reverence engendered by Dr. Watts revolted against Mr. Parker.

‘Hadn’t we better change the subject,’ I said, ‘seeing that I am his curate?’

The ex-one, with his legs hanging over one of the easy-chairs, as much at his ease as if it were still his, and the purchase-money were not in his waistcoat-pocket, glanced at me, amused.

‘The old man’s luckier than he deserves to be, anyhow,’ he said. ‘You’ll just suit him.’

I inquired if there were any well-to-do parishioners.

‘There’s Mrs. Bingham and her five lovely daughters (three of them are away just now)—she is piscatorially inclined.’

I felt horror-stricken. ‘Fishes!—a woman with a family!’

‘You see,’ pursued little Mr. Parker, ‘you must not be shocked; she’s not rich, though she lives in a

good house—her money dies with her.'

I felt relieved. 'Well, it may be praiseworthy though masculine. Is there good trout in the stream here?'

Mr. Parker unexpectedly burst out laughing.

'My dear Mr. Williams, excuse me, but you're made for this place—positively made for it. Trout! no, very little; though to see Mrs. Bingham with her tackle all about her (a different fly for every fish) stand perseveringly day after day trying to catch one miserable sole—I mean trout—it gives one a feeling of positive respect.'

'It must,' I said warmly. I was glad to hear the ex-curate respected anything. I was afraid he didn't. I really began to have a better opinion of him (though of course I could not approve his sentiments) as I shook hands with him on the platform that night.

The next morning as I sat looking over a pile of sermons I had constructed at intervals, my eye was caught by an object at my garden gate—an object of bulk and dignity—a clerical object, evidently the vicar.

How truly kind! my heart kindled. How I loathed the smell of that tobacco which surrounded me; how I blushed at the remembrance of that epithet which I had heard applied to this kindhearted man only the evening before.

The Rev. Dr. Walsh knocked like a bishop, and entered like an archbishop. He had (I say it now) a swelling manner. He seemed to fill all the chairs at once, so to speak, and drive me into Mrs. Spinx's coal-pan.

'Mr. Williams!' said my vicar, extending his hand.

The manner was benevolent—affectionate; it seemed to say, 'Fill the chairs, my dear curate—I, your vicar, will retire into nothing.'

I took his hand, and felt my heart overflowing with love and duty. That eye, bright and intellectual—that broad brow—

'Your first cure, I think?' continued my vicar.

I assented.

'Williams!' pursued the great man—the name strikes me. I had a dear friend once of that name—he was a man who did his duty, and never shrank from work. Do you shrink from work?'

'This was the man after my mother's own heart—a man eager in the path of duty—eager to lead others therein.

I replied modestly, 'I hoped I was wishful to do my duty.'

'Ah! yes,' said my vicar, somewhat abstractedly. 'My dear Mr. Williams, the fact is I am in affliction. I am not one who presses his grief on others (that I should look upon as selfishness), but in this case you can help me.'

I replied I should be too happy.

My vicar cleared his throat and went on.

'Blessed as I am, and thankful as I am for my many blessings, yet in one thing I am unfortunate. I have a dear family, but that family suffers. My wife is delicate; our eldest girl, a sweet child aged fourteen, is fragile in the extreme. My lot is cast in the country, and my family requires a frequent supply of that ozone which is only to be found in sea air. My dear wife has with our children been at Scarborough for a fortnight. Gladly would I stay here alone unrepiningly (we should not repine, Mr. Williams!), but what can I do when I hear daily that my beloved child asks for "Papa?" "Her wishes must be gratified," says our family doctor. I have been torn with doubts: is my duty here, or does it call me to my child?'

My vicar paused—and *swelled!*

From my position by the coal-pan I could see the agitation of my superior's manner while alluding to his child, and flashing through my mind came the recollection of the man who had sat in the same chair only the evening before, and called him 'humbug!' I loathed the thought.

'Oh! go to your child at once, sir,' I said (the dear little girl might be pining for him at this very moment). 'I will endeavour, though unworthily, to fulfil your duties and——'

My vicar seemed to think I had

said enough. He did not stay long after this, but he pressed my hand at parting, and said, 'God bless you, Williams!'

My feelings were mixed when the interview was over. I sat down again to my pile of sermons, but failed to derive my usual satisfaction from these interesting works. I had lost the benefit of this man's teaching at the outset. I was very young, ardent, and enthusiastic, and—I was disappointed.

Sunday was the day but one after. On Saturday I had made the round of the village, shaking hands with mothers and kissing their offspring like a model young curate on the back of a penny tract. I could well understand a Parker considering the place slow. There were boys and pigs in abundance, a church in a state of dilapidation, and a modern vicarage near it with handsome iron gates. It was a commonplace village, devoid even of a permanent doctor, and yet overrun with children; but the state of the village has little to do with my story.

Sunday came. I rose early and nervous. My hands shook a little as I arranged my bands, looked twice to see that my sermon accompanied me, and did not recover from that Johnnyish feeling I was subject to till I stood in the reading-desk.

The congregation was small,—painfully small to a zealous young curate,—but just under the reading-desk was a pew containing three ladies. I could not help seeing them, or I should have preferred not to do so. One of them was not a stranger to me, she was my young fellow-traveller, the two others were tall, ordinary women. I caught a pair of blue—I mean my railway companion looked up, and if it had not been in church, would, I think, have smiled. The look seemed to say 'Oh! it's you again, is it?' Then for the rest of the church service (and it gave me inward satisfaction) she kept her eyes to her book. Shall I say that it warmed me a little to my work to see that pew of ladies, as I ascended the pulpit steps?

My mother thought my sermons would get me a bishopric, and

though not of that opinion myself, yet I still did think they had merits. This was my first sermon. My congregation was, without the occupants of the pew, limited to ten. I was in earnest, but—I was twenty-three. I felt an inward glow as I thought I might prove to the girl, who had laughed at me the other day, that I was not devoid of eloquence. Perhaps that eloquence might make an impression on this frivolous and worldly-minded young person. I had chosen one of my best themes—one to which I had affixed the 'J. W.' lovingly, and as I gave it out, it answered my expectations on delivery.

There was one passage, alluding to the snares and flowery seductions of this world, which made me feel all aglow against such seductions, as I denounced them. But did I raise any such kindred feelings in my congregation? I ventured to glance round. The ten hearers, from any expression in their faces, were evidently uncalculated to know the meaning of the word 'seductions.' I looked down into the pew; two tall, plainly-attired ladies sat listening intently, their eyes raised, their hands folded; but the one whom the words were intended specially to benefit, reclined in a corner of the large pew—fast asleep. Oh, ephemeral muslins and laces, and wearer as ephemeral!

I felt my indignation rise. The day, it was true, was hot, but why could she not listen as well as her companions? Were my words more suited to the comprehension of the latter? My mother would have hoped so. As for myself, I took off my gown with far fewer feelings of satisfaction than when I put it on.

Passing up the churchyard, the three ladies were in front of me, and I heard a voice from under a most delicate parasol say—

'What a long sermon! I wish there weren't sermons in summer, only ventilators.'

'Hush, Lizzie,' said one of the ladies, 'and do recollect it's Sunday.'

Again my spirit sank at what I thought the frivolity of this girl. My mother desired nothing more earnestly than to witness the be-

stowal of my affections, but then the object must be suitable. Suitable in her eyes, meant—quiet, easily led (by herself), retiring, a lover of needles and thread, rather than of millinery and self-decoration—whose views of pleasure should be of the teachers' tea-meeting or 'improving the mind' order. From my shy nature, and early nurture on Dr. Watts, I, too, had the sort of idea that a pretty bonnet betokened a love of the world in the wearer, and a sparkling manner, an undue lightness of character; and yet, and yet—these were the ideas instilled into me. The time might be coming when views of my own should do combat with my mother's views—which would be conqueror? At present there was no such conflict. I saw an elegantly-dressed young woman with worldly sentiments. I saw two plainly-attired ladies, who might each have been cut out to order (one was rather old to be sure) for a Mrs. Williams. Might it not be that the hand of Providence had planted me here to choose a wife from these two? Time would show.

The afternoon service was equally as unsatisfactory as the morning one. There was the same small congregation, the same pew full, the same tendency on the part of Miss Lizzie to hurt my self-love, if nothing else, by falling asleep during the sermon, and afterwards my lonely meal and evening in my cottage.

A week had nearly passed away. I was beginning to get some knowledge of my parishioners, but—human nature is only human nature after all—I was also exceedingly dull.

My mother's circle at home, though a restricted one, *was* a circle. It took in one or two young men who had never shown any disposition to forsake the ways of their fathers; it took in divers young ladies; they weren't beautiful, or clever, or distinguished in any way, still they were young ladies, and twenty-three requires something of the kind.

Here was I, the sole moving orb in my own circle. I might gaze at and revolve round myself, or Mrs. Spinx, but I required more.

I had, two or three times during that week, fleeting visions of the ladies who sat below the reading-desk, but fleeting visions are unsubstantial. One morning towards the end of the week, as I was meditating getting a dog as a companion, there came a note which roused my pleasurable emotions, the purport being that Mrs. Bingham, of Beech Grove, would be glad if I would give her my company at dinner at five o'clock.

I *must* have been lonely, for I recollect I had a feeling of satisfaction that it was for this afternoon instead of to-morrow.

I was just finishing my toilet when a remembrance flashed into my mind. Bingham was the name of the lady who fished! I almost wished I weren't going; but then was any credit to be placed on Mr. Parker's statements?

After obtaining from Mrs. Spinx the route, I made my way to Beech Grove. A narrow lane behind the church brought me to some white gates. Beech Grove did not belie its promising sound. There weren't many beeches, certainly, but there was a nice neat lawn, and a few flowerbeds, and a verandah, and a carriage drive devoid of weeds. You might see Beech Grove in ninety-nine parishes out of every hundred, and live there comfortably. *Cela dépend.*

A man on arriving is at once on the scene of action. None of those mysterious paper boxes, out of which come we know not what to be put on at the house of entertainment, before wax lights and a mirror. (I believe if there are many ladies and but one mirror, this is a work of time.) A man being not so easily put out of order in the transit, has not one minute for reflection from doorstep to presence chamber.

'Mr. Williams!' and then, following up my name, I was shaking hands with a long thin ditto, appertaining to my deaf travelling companion. Not masculine to look at, keen-eyed and severe, but *correct* to a degree.

'My daughters,' said Mrs. Bingham, 'Jane and Elizabeth.'

Having a vague idea that Providence was in some way connected

with my acquaintance with these ladies, I surveyed the Miss Bingham with interest. They weren't attractive (I mean to the eye). Jane was her mother over again, as the saying is, without the deafness, and with an acidity of manner that might perhaps have been due to her passed stage of youthfulness—and spinsterhood. Elizabeth was considerably younger, shorter, stouter, with curling hair, and a more amiable expression.

True, her face was not distinguished by much beauty. Her nose was neither a delicate vivacious *retroussé* nor a statuesque Grecian; but why proceed? Elizabeth was the sort of young person to whom I had been accustomed. Elizabeth had the outside characteristics of 'suitable.' If Providence had led me to the Miss Bingham, Elizabeth was *the* Miss Bingham, and the presence of Elizabeth made me more at home.

As the one man, I had to be entertained. Miss Bingham tried to draw me out on church architecture. Miss Bingham deplored the poverty of the parish in preventing the restoration of the church. Mrs. Bingham knitted, and threw in a word here and there, while Elizabeth bent over her work and was modestly silent.

'Jane,' said Mrs. Bingham, suddenly, 'I hope nothing has happened to Lizzie.'

'She is always late, mamma,' responded Jane; 'and knows, being a visitor, she will be waited for, which I call taking advantage.'

'I am thankful she is no child of mine,' said the deaf lady, heaving a sigh. 'As it is, she is a great responsibility.'

Two minutes afterwards the door opened, and the 'great responsibility' came in—the young lady who fell asleep during my sermon—in a toilet that aimed at something above neatness, and that floated about her, a cloud of pink and white, something that might, like a jam tart to a sick child, be very good to look at and very bad for you. I had eyes and saw, but I was a man not to be led by my eyes—prudent beyond my years.

'Lizzie, my dear,' said Mrs. Bingham, 'you're very late.'

'I'm sorry for that, aunt,' replied Lizzie, at the top of her musical voice. 'I met Charley Langton, looking so wretched, that I went farther than I intended, and he has come back with me in to dinner.'

'Lizzie,' said her aunt, 'how——'

'He has lost his father, poor boy, never got over it, and I thought——'

'Yes, yes,' said Mrs. Bingham, waving her hand, 'no one is more glad to see him than I; but it's the principle of young ladies inviting young men.'

Lizzie's lips curled. 'Young men!' she said to her cousin, Miss Bingham, 'why Charley's only sixteen.'

'You know mamma's rules, Lizzie;' and Lizzie turned away in a manner that made me jot down temper as another failing in this very faulty young person.

The entrance of Charley, a languid, delicate-looking boy, put an end to the discussion.

Mrs. Bingham certainly gave him as cordial a welcome as if she had asked him. Even the two Miss Bingham greeted him with more demonstration than is usually bestowed on boys of sixteen. 'Very kind,' I thought, but it was a kindness Charley did not seem to appreciate, as he moved away to Lizzie in the window, and stood by her there in a languid yet easy way till we went in to dinner.

I found myself between Mrs. Bingham and her daughter Elizabeth. Miss Bingham took the foot of the table; their cousin and Charley were opposite me. Mrs. Bingham conversed a little with me about my mother and home, and loneliness here sympathetically; so that what with hot soup and the startling loudness of my replies, I became very warm indeed.

Elizabeth *was* — retiring. She wanted setting off on a subject; even then she did not go any extreme way, but replied modestly, and retired again. Miss Lizzie, too, was silent, and again offended my taste at the beginning of the meal. (I had many particular notions about young ladies.)

'I am so hungry,' she said; 'riding round Drayton Hill, with all that delicious heather out, is beneficial to me. May I have some beer, Jane?'

'You can have what you like,' said Miss Bingham, acidly.

And Lizzie's glass was filled. To drink beer seemed to me as masculine as a coquettish bonnet looked worldly.

I looked at Elizabeth's glass. Pure water! and felt thankful.

The dinner was quite a plain one. After the soup, chickens and a shoulder of mutton. I trembled at the chickens, but Mrs. Bingham declining my aid, I was feeling able to converse with Elizabeth, when Miss Lizzie's clear voice came out for the benefit of the table.

'I've been offered two tickets to-day for the Beaconfield ball; it's in a fortnight.'

Mrs. Bingham, busy with the chickens, did not hear. Miss Bingham exclaimed—

'One doesn't hear a sensible word there.'

'Doesn't one,' said Lizzie; 'well, I must be indifferent to sensible words, for I want to go very much. Do you recollect, Charley, the ball last year, and how you got spoony on Miss Brett, and quite deserted me?'

'No, I don't, Lizzie. I recollect being sent off by Percy.'

'Hush,' said Lizzie, laughingly, but I was busy with my thoughts.

Spoony!! A young lady to use such a word. I felt electrified. I turned to the gentle Elizabeth.

'Do you, too, care for balls?' I asked, somewhat anxiously.

'No,' said Elizabeth, in a very low voice, and blushing; 'at least,' she added, 'I always like the school treat more.'

Here was a disciplined mind for you. The carnal nature conquered—desire under control.

Said Miss Bingham, 'You must regret the absence of your vicar, Mr. Williams.'

'I do indeed; he seems such a superior man. He was divided between his wish to stay and help me, and his anxiety to be with his sick child.'

'Did he leave you the key of his kitchen garden?' said Lizzie, irrelevantly.

'No,' I replied, not seeing the force of the question.

'He has such nice peaches,' continued Lizzie. 'When I was here last year the bishop came down, and the bishop had as many of them as he liked to eat, and Dr. Walsh was so pleased to see the bishop eat them. Has Mrs. Spinx any peaches in her garden?'

'No, of course not;' but I said I was independent of peaches.

'Dr. Walsh says his have a peculiar flavour,' said Charley. 'Percy got a whole lot sent last year.'

'Don't you know the proverb, Charley, "Stroke me and I will stroke thee." Dr. Walsh strokes Percy with the peculiar flavoured peaches; Percy must stroke the Doctor with a pine. Dr. Walsh, my dear, is partial to stroking, and does not object to an English pine.'

I felt aglow with indignation, though the young lady opposite seemed quite unconscious of such a feeling being possible.

Mrs. Bingham observed (it was wonderful sometimes how she heard), 'It's a pity his eldest girl is so delicate.'

'Oh! Aunt Bingham,' burst out Lizzie, 'you know very well she isn't. Dr. Walsh finds Marsden dull and Scarborough the reverse, and just because Emily hasn't a colour—'

I could not wait to the end of the sentence—I could stand it no longer.

'You seem to forget who you are speaking before, Miss D'Arcy. I am Dr. Walsh's curate. Am I to sit and listen to slander against my vicar? There is always some one to impute evil motives to the best of men and deeds.'

Mrs. Bingham looked pleased. Charley began—

'Mr. Williams, it's not slander; it's as well known——'

When Lizzie stopped him with a look, and then turned on me a straightforward glance out of her large blue eyes. She was certainly very pretty, especially with the flush on her cheeks they had now; but then, is not beauty deceitful?

She said nothing at first, to my

surprise; but after her steady look the corners of her mouth curled with smiles, and she said demurely—

‘I still think Dr. Walsh *ought* to have left you the key of his kitchen-garden, Mr. Williams.’

Then she turned to Charley, and the two talked together for the rest of dinner, alone.

If beauty is deceitful, there was no deceit in Elizabeth; if placidity is estimable in a woman, Elizabeth was much to be esteemed. On principle I did like and esteem her; on principle, also, I disliked and thought little of her cousin. Our views on so many points coincided; indeed I might say on every point, about parish work, society, books, &c.

It was still daylight when dinner was over, and Lizzie said—

‘Oh! let us have a game at croquet. Mr. Williams, shall we teach you?’

It seemed a veiled attempt at reconciliation. I had reprovèd Miss Lizzie in a way many young ladies might have resented, so I gave in to the croquet.

Then Elizabeth said she had work to finish.

‘One of those everlasting flannel petticoats?’ suggested Charley.

(Another virtue—she made flannel petticoats!)

‘Charley, you’re a goose,’ said Lizzie. ‘It is just because they aren’t everlasting she makes them; but put them by for to-night, and be good-natured, Elizabeth.’

(Could she be anything else?)

So Elizabeth sacrificed the flannel petticoats at the shrine of croquet, and we had to choose our sides.

I have seen men linger over this, as if preference in croquet showed preference in life. Charley, however, showed no such hesitation.

‘Come, Lizzie, I won’t desert you to-night,’ he said; so we began, and of course I was beaten. Elizabeth played in a tranquil manner, while her cousin’s ball was like a shooting star, and a shooting star had far the best of it.

‘Don’t you think this rather a poor game to be made so much fuss about?’ observed Elizabeth to me.

(She had tried three times at one hoop, and we stood side by side.)

‘I did not like the notion of it,’ I said, ‘but it seems harmless.’

‘Oh yes, or I should not play, of course.’

And then Lizzie made a swoop down, and sent me to a laurel bush at the antipodes.

I was not near my partner again till just the end of the game. Lizzie was advancing to the stick, and Elizabeth asked me—

‘Do you think her pretty?’ (How very feminine!)

Yes, I thought her very pretty, but I did not think it was the kind of beauty I admired the most.

‘Oh! Mr. Williams,’ said Elizabeth, with more animation than I had seen her display, ‘you think exactly like I do. I call her pretty, only it’s a pity she’s such a flirt.’

I did not quite like this. I did not doubt Lizzie being a flirt, only the good-nature of Elizabeth in telling me so. Or was it that she had detected something inflammable about me, and so set up a fire-guard as a precaution. I would not believe that anything but good-nature could dwell in that Miss Bingham, whom I believed Providence had selected for me.

‘She has only an invalid father, and he spoils her so,’ continued Elizabeth. ‘I am very fond of her; but we are so different—she likes balls and things—and I——’ Miss Elizabeth’s autobiography was closed by Lizzie coming up.

‘There! we’ve beaten you, Mr. Williams, so now there’s nothing left for you but to make the best of it by saying something polite.’

Was this flirting? It might be, yet somehow it seemed harmless, like the croquet. Then we went in, and had some tea and music. Elizabeth played, certainly not professionally, but nicely, and I did not like too much time devoted to music.

‘Now, Lizzie, sing something,’ said Charley.

‘Lizzie,’ called out her aunt, ‘remember your sore throat.’

Lizzie said it was quite well.

‘I’m responsible for you,’ said Mrs. Bingham.

So Lizzie, with very flushed cheeks, gave up her own opinion, and sat down with Charley to a game of chess, over which they talked a great deal. Then Elizabeth drew a low stool near her mother's chair, and we made quite a little home picture, with Lizzie excluded—and yet—and yet—I wished (as Mrs. Bingham gave out her improving sentences, and Elizabeth sounded a gentle accompaniment) that if such a thing were possible, blue eyes, and pink muslin, and golden hair with pink ribbon in it weren't of this world, worldly. I wished it very calmly, but the wish was there, even as I felt 'safe' with my mother's views of safety, seated beside a girl in grey silk who was suited to me.

So the evening came to an end. Charley said he would go with me as far as the inn where his horse was, and we took leave together. We had just got to the end of the drive when pattering feet behind us made us turn round.

Ghosts are not in my category of beliefs, of course; yet I should as soon have expected to see one as Lizzie.

Charley exclaimed, 'Why, Liz, what is it?' as she stood panting, and I waited, supposing she had some girlish message to a friend.

I started when she began. 'Mr. Williams, I wanted to tell you I was sorry for what I said at dinner. I should not have spoken what I thought so decidedly. You were quite right in telling me every one may be mistaken, and I respect you for it. Good-night.'

She held out her hand (what a little white hand it looked in the moonlight!) and giving me no time to speak, she ran back to the house.

I could not help thinking about this. Was not the proceeding unusual? not quite in accordance with the Williams' rubric. That was true, but then—was the Williams' rubric infallible? A young girl running out to tell a gentleman she was in the wrong! It might be impulsive, but it was honest and genuine. What a pity she was so fond of balls! What a pity she dressed herself in attractive webs to

dazzle the eyes of foolish men! Was she a flirt? at all events she had not thought it worth her while to try me. Was I duly grateful? I could not doubt Elizabeth's word. If the Williams' estimate were right, she was all a shepherdess should be—while Lizzie was one who, with the crook in her hands, would lead the lambs all astray. I felt sure of this—almost sure—and yet, as I fell asleep, I did wish jam tart was not so unwholesome.

I did not see anything unwholesome for many days, though I often saw Elizabeth in the cottages, seated by the aged, like a ministering angel. Was it necessary that such angels should be clad in sober garments and the most unattractive of bonnets? I believed so.

I was sorry not to see Lizzie—sorry in a vague sort of way, when an old woman asked Elizabeth one day in my presence why Miss Lizzie never came now.

Elizabeth coloured, said she did not know, and soon after took her leave. So, there had been days when Lizzie, too, had been a ministering angel. I liked to think of those blue eyes bent on the complaints of the poor—those small hands busied. Johnny Williams, your imagination is wandering. The fair wordling had tried and gone back, while Elizabeth was daily at her post. Daily, indeed; and so I could not fail to carry her books sometimes, or see her to the Beech Grove gates, or put up her umbrella for her if it rained, and thinking what a good wife she would make on the Williams' principle. I tried to love her. The loving had not come yet, however, and I was surprised, and took my own heart to task about it. I was so taking my heart to task one afternoon when I met Charley Langton as I turned from the Beech Grove gates. I had declined entering, as somehow I felt as if Mrs. Bingham were beyond me. She was Elizabeth's mother, of course, but perhaps I had not got over that undiscovered report about her fishing—at all events, I did not seek her presence. I met Charley on a fine young horse, but

riding somewhat moodily. He pulled up at the sight of me.

'Have you been in there?' (meaning Beech Grove) he asked naturally, seeing me so near the gates.

I said 'no,' without thinking it necessary to allude to my *tête-à-tête* with Elizabeth, and then asked if he had been.

'No. I can stand as much as most fellows, but I can't stand that woman often,' and looking back, he shook his fist at the Beeches; 'but perhaps you are an old friend,' he added, smiling.

I did not feel called upon to defend Mrs. Bingham, at all events yet. *She* was not my vicar. I said I had never seen them till I came here.

'Lizzie is kept in a complete state of imprisonment; it's a horrid shame,' Charley went on; 'she got into such a row about the other night, so now she declares she won't go into the village, for her aunt said she went to meet—people,' added Charley, pulling himself and his horse up at the same moment. But could I doubt who 'people' were, simple as I was—no—no.

'Why does she stay?'

'Why,' pursued Charley, 'she has only an invalid father, and she don't like bothering him about such a trifle.'

I gulped down the insult to myself of being 'such a trifle.'

'I should think Mrs. Bingham's a clever woman, only rather masculine, isn't she?' (Here was a neat way of getting to the truth of the 'fishing.') I had misgivings as to the lawfulness thereof, but then she might be my—not a pleasant word.

'She don't smoke or hunt, if you mean that by "masculine,"' said Charley; 'perhaps if she did it would improve her.'

This was shocking, but I was 'hot' now.

'Doesn't she fish?' I inquired.

Charley looked slightly astonished. 'How! fish?'

'For the support of her family?'

'Oh yes—fishes for her daughters—Elizabeth's often the bait—regularly poked down too.'

What a light broke in on me! about my future—too. So, it was

slang on the ex-curate's part, and Johnny Williams hadn't seen it. I felt the awakening dreadful. The subject was not a pleasant one, and I could only say, 'Oh, I see,' and change it. Perhaps Charley had not noticed my inferior sagacity to his own. I hoped not, for he began—

'A whole lot of the 6th Dragoon fellows want me to get Lizzie out. Captain Grey saw her last year. She is awfully pretty, and a regular brick too. Oh,' and I say, continued Charley, 'my cousin Percy has some people the day after to-morrow, and he told me to look out for some men—will you go? He's an awfully jolly fellow.'

I had misgivings that 'awfully jolly fellows' and I were not suited. However, the world seemed just to have been turned upside down, and I felt a little extra shake on one side would be trifling.

'I don't care much for society—gay society I mean.'

'Oh,' said the boy, a smile curling his lips, 'it's all right then—just the sort of place for you.'

And here, after saying I would go, we parted. Parted—to think. Could it be that Elizabeth was in the secret of her mother's plans? No, oh no! Could it be that Elizabeth had not known why her cousin had given up the village? My thoughts turned to Lizzie. If it had not been from the force of Dr. Watts and my mother combined, those deep, trustful blue eyes, and that frank lively manner would have attracted me very much; as it was—

I was going to the party.

* * * *

Just what would suit me! The 'jolly fellows' then turned over continental views with an anxious eye on the young lady near them. Having finished looking at them, they tried to remember a riddle, which they rarely could, and they made a rush at the light refreshments, which ended the evening, to relieve the monotony of nothing to say by asking if somebody would have a sandwich. It was half-past eight o'clock when the cross between gig and dogcart brought me to the jolly fellow's abode. Then I found that Mr. Langton had been born with a

silver spoon in his mouth. I saw it in the pretty, though not extensive park we drove through; in the blaze of light which dazzled me when I found myself, with some misgivings, in a handsome hall. There was a sound of laughter through a door on my right, which did not remind me of anything I had ever heard over 'continental views.' It was with no misgiving, but with a certainty that Charley had taken me in, that I entered a room on the left—a room which had been despoiled of all furniture and carpeting, and had only ominous candles and mirrors, clad in flowers, on its walls—a room that was not suited to a Williams. At the other end there were folding doors open, and a tableau of ladies beyond—not a single man. As I followed the servant across the floor (slippery as ice), I wished vainly it were ice, and that I could sink under it before we reached that other inner room. I had been punctual, and this was the result.

A large room with corners and recesses, and ladies everywhere! I was in it, hot, cold, agonized!—the only man. And then, oh, relief! a snowy vision came and stood before me. What matter that the pearls on the white neck and the flowers in the golden hair betokened preparation for the slippery foundation of the next room? The hand stretched out to me, the sweet voice speaking to me were Lizzie's—she had come to befriend me.

'You are the only person who thinks punctuality a virtue, Mr. Williams,' she said, blushing, for she had come across the room to speak to me, and perhaps Mrs Bingham haunted her. 'Mr. Langton has some of the gentlemen to dinner, so we must try to amuse you for a little while. Shall I introduce you to Miss Blake, Mr. Langton's aunt?'

She crossed the room with me—she *guaranteed* me, so to speak, and made me no longer a stranger. She told Miss Blake (an old lady with white hair and a face which had essence of kindness in it) who I was, and a stranger here, and Miss Blake grew 'double distilled' essence at once.

'Shall I introduce you to any one

I know?' asked Lizzie; and I thanked her and said, 'By-and-by.'

Might there not be a time when a man wanted tempting with jam-tart, having been on plain diet very long? It was very nice having that pleasant voice saying 'Mr. Williams' (my name had never sounded musical before). And then, all too soon, there was a sound of opening doors, and some men came in. One crossed over in the easiest, most careless way (I felt it was so different to my way) to where we were. Not the sort of man I had ever seen carrying about sandwiches in my mother's circle,—it was the 'jolly fellow.' He had light whiskers and moustache, and rather languid blue eyes. The languor vanished as he shook hands with, and welcomed me.

'Have you been fighting over that election, Mr. Langton?' asked Lizzie.

'Yes, and I've won, of course. Just fancy yourself in the olden time, Miss D'Arcy, there's been a (consult Bulwer for correct names)—and being victorious, I come up to get the prize from you.'

'It was usual in the old time to see the result oneself, before giving the prize,' laughed Lizzie.

'Exactly so, mademoiselle; but then, you see, we are in the new times now, not the old ones, so you will dance the first with me.'

'Really! are you equal to it? A quadrille, I suppose!'

'No—as I go in for exertion at all, it may as well be a waltz. Please accompany me to the fiddler.'

I heard her lower her voice and say something about 'old ladies,' and then the answer, also low, of which I only caught the words 'old women' and 'hanged.'

She shook her head, laughing again, and then put her hand on his arm, and he led her away. It seemed to me as if the little white-gloved hand rested confidently there.

'A flirt!' Was it for the dislike to think her such, and the condemnation in which I held such things, that I watched her so narrowly? There were many other men now, and girls fair, dark, pretty, and yet I did not trouble my head about

their morals. I only saw one couple, and how—after the young host had led Lizzie to the band—he whirled her round the room with the blue eyes looking over his shoulder. How I condemned dancing! I would preach against it next Sunday, for Lizzie's benefit, if she would not fall asleep—only I believed she would. And just then I turned, and found myself being spoken to by the old maid.

'You don't dance the waltz, Mr. Williams. Ah! we must have a quadrille presently. Do you know any of these young ladies? There's one of the Miss Bingham's looking at those prints by the recess—shall I introduce you?'

And then for the first time I saw Miss Elizabeth. She was not joining in the giddy dance, though she was arrayed in costume that looked like it. Her arms were bare; they were also red; and at the moment when I first saw her, her face looked cross below a green wreath.

I said to the old lady I knew Miss Bingham, and went up accordingly to the table by the recess.

'I did not see you before, Miss Elizabeth.'

'And I did not expect to see you,' was the reply.

'I was deceived as to the nature of the party.'

'Many people are deceived,' said Miss Elizabeth, somewhat tartly. (Did this mean Elizabeth was deceived in me?)

I was silent. The young lady looked 'put out.' Had she been an ordinary girl, I should have set it down to the fact of her being left out in the dance; but then Elizabeth was not an ordinary girl—or I had tried to think not—and I supposed she did not dance.

She seemed to think better of her crossness, and gathering her garments together, said—

'Won't you look at these views, Mr. Williams? They are very good.'

I sat down beside her, and together we surveyed cities, and steep mountains, and decorated cathedrals. Was I not at home now? Was not this the sort of thing to which I was accustomed? And yet, and yet—the heart is deceitful above

all things. As I sat by the side of Elizabeth, and turned over the views, I felt as if I should like to throw my scruples to the winds, and be in the position of Mr. Percy Langton.

'I should like to go to Cologne to see the cathedral; should not you?' said the young lady.

I answered abstractedly; her words fell flat. I wondered what she had in mind when she put on her green dress and wreath. Surely a plainer costume would have done to turn over views in. And then the music stopped, and we saw the dancers sauntering about the other room. I felt my *tête-à-tête* growing irksome, and was glad when Charley, looking mischievous, came up and broke it, with a tall lanky man in tow.

'Didn't I say this was the right sort of thing, Mr. Williams? Ah! Miss Elizabeth! may I introduce Captain Crossfell for the galope?'

Elizabeth blushed violently; she hesitated; she glanced at me, and then she stammered, 'I don't dance round dances.'

'I beg your pardon, Miss Elizabeth,' said Charley, 'but as you always used to dance round dances, I was not aware of the change. Captain Crossfell, I will soon find you some one who dances everything.'

The tug went its way, and again I was left with Elizabeth. Could I mistake the way in which she looked at me when refusing to dance? I hoped I could mistake it, because I felt to-night, as I sat by her side, it was not a position I should voluntarily choose. Lizzie came up to us next, on Mr. Langton's arm—came and stood by her cousin.

'Elizabeth, you haven't been dancing; I will introduce you to some one for this.'

Again Elizabeth's cheek flushed. 'I don't dance the round dances.'

Lizzie for one moment looked astonished, and then I saw the same disdainful curl on her lips I had noticed there before, as she merely said, 'Oh!'

A tall, dark, fashionable-looking man here made his way to us.

'Miss D'Arcy,' he said, 'I've

timed myself exactly, and this is ours.'

'I thought Mr. Langton eyed the speaker with rather less than his usual nonchalance, as he bent down to Lizzie and led her away.

Even I, Johnny Williams, eyed him with small satisfaction. There was admiration of his pretty partner in his dark eyes. Mr. Langton stood near me through the dance; but he wasn't clerical, nor did I feel so. I forgot all the bread-and-milky notions on which I had been nourished. My eyes followed Lizzie's movements and that dark man's. Why did they dance so little? Anything was better than the way he had of talking to her.

'Mr. Williams,' said the host, suddenly, 'you will dance this quadrille.'

Dance! I! And then, before I had replied, Lizzie was near us again, with very bright eyes, and cheeks, and her golden hair floating over her shoulders.

I felt like St. Anthony. I would burst the trammels. Elizabeth was looking up. She danced quadrilles—well, let her.

'Will you dance this with me, Miss Lizzie?'

She opened her bright eyes very wide. 'Oh, yes; with pleasure.'

It seemed to me that there was a barometer near me, which sank to 'stormy' in a moment.

Could I believe, as we took our places, that *my* feet were on that slippery floor?—that I had beside me a blue wreath and a gossamer dress?—that instead of instructing Miss Lizzie in the way she should go, here was she teaching me the figures?

Had it come to figures?

We had a *vis-à-vis*, of course; that *vis-à-vis* was Elizabeth and a youth, nondescript as to age, and looked upon by the young ladies as some one who might be snubbed with impunity. Elizabeth had not so snubbed him; but her expression was not favourable to any attempts at conversation on the part of that youth. Silently she advanced; silently gave her cousin her hand; and if ever lady's eyes said 'Traitor!' Miss Elizabeth Bingham's eyes said it to me, when she got near enough

in the ladies' chain. I cared little (though it might be ungrateful) for such talk. There were other speaking eyes near me, and a sweet voice too. If only she would change a little!—and yet, what did I wish to see changed? The delicate dress which added to her beauty? the winning manner which made men love her? No. Round dances: and I would speak to her about these same round dances.

There was little time to speak in the figures; but, alas! they came to an end; and with her hand still on my arm, I did not much care. I could promenade with her more conscientiously.

'Have you ever seen the conservatory, Mr. Williams? and should you like?'

Like! I felt as if I should not object to living there, as we strolled through the rooms (with that dark man envying me—I felt he was) and got among the ferns and flowers—Miss Lizzie and I. Now was my time. I had read of sermons in stones; this should be in a conservatory.

'Your friend, Charley,' I began, 'took me in about this party; he did not give me to understand it was to be a dance.'

Lizzie laughed.

'And you were startled by the absence of carpet. Well, isn't this far nicer than what you expected? We talk far less gossip; and it makes one feel happy, going round to that delicious band.'

I could not help confessing to myself that it was nicer than I expected; but I must not shrink from my subject.

'Going round!' she had said it; here was an opportunity.

'I do not see why people should not be as happy going square as going round,' I said. I wanted to put it as gently and pleasantly as possible. Miss Lizzie, who was smelling a rose, continued doing so. I must speak more plainly. I wasn't understood. Miss Lizzie's face emerged from the petals.

'And I don't see why people mayn't be as happy going round as going square: there's no law against it, is there, Mr. Williams?'

'There is no law against it, Miss D'Arcy,' I replied; 'but it seems to me that consistently——'

She stopped me. 'Do you speak to me as a clergyman, or as a friend?'

I hesitated. Dare I?—No; I dared not. 'As a friend,' I said.

She drew herself up out of her rose.

'Then, Mr. Williams, let me tell you I think you presume in lecturing me; because I have been taught to believe that I may enjoy the— the roses,' she said, touching the flower; 'and you think it better to shut your eyes and not look at them. Shall you take me to task for differing from you? No, no; and now,' she added, 'we won't be cross with each other, but we won't speak of this any more, shall we, Mr. Williams?' She laughed a little. 'You'd better speak to my cousin Elizabeth.'

Just at this moment, who should appear but that young lady, brought to the conservatory by that youth. I could feel for Mr. Langton hanging old women. Williams though I was, I could have executed that youth complacently. If they hadn't come, who knows what might not have happened? As we passed out of the conservatory I caught the expression on Elizabeth's face—it was not pleasing, but what cared I for that? As soon as we entered the dancing-room again the tall man with black whiskers, whom I regarded in the light of my bitterest enemy, came up to us.

'This is ours, I believe,' he said; and at these words the little white fingers slid off my arm, the band struck up, and once again *she* was floating round in one of those objectionable waltzes. That they were objectionable I still held—but, alas! I fear my moral scruples did not preponderate just then. That jolly fellow Percy Langton loomed up to me in anything but a state of jollity it appeared to me; indeed, so much on my own level, that, after Lizzie's dress had just brushed our legs, I remarked, 'Who is that man?'

'Which man?' said the host, looking at me somewhat curiously.

I indicated him carelessly (just as

if I had not been narrowly watching him the whole time).

'Lord Ernest Wilmot.'

I shrank—at least I felt I did. My rival, a nobleman! He loved her—of course he did—he might be telling her so at this moment. The thought was maddening. There wasn't a chance for me to speak to her then—others claimed her—others who probably loved her too! I hated every man there. I ordered my vehicle and was driven back to my lodgings. I loved her—I had loved her from the first. I would ask her to be my wife, and if she said 'Yes' (I gasped), why she might—dance quadrilles! How about the shepherdess and the crook? How about the jam tart and the sick child now? Pshaw! was I to pluck a dandelion with a rose so near? My mother's views!—psaw! again. My mother was an old woman, and had always looked through the narrow end of the telescope. I would look through the other side. I loved her. Would the party be broken up yet—and how about Lord Ernest Wilmot? Many a girl had the good sense to prefer manly worth (this was typified by me, J. W.) to—(here I grew vague). But now, how was I to do it? My intentions being strictly honourable, must I write to her father?—(man unknown, to man unknown—that would not do; besides, it would take too long). I would go over to Mrs. Bingham's to-morrow morning and ask for the hand of her niece. My mind felt relieved, and I slept a little.

I rose looking very like a lover on the back of a yellow novel, and the appearance was not becoming. My tongue was dry, my hands hot; however, a clean, well-starched tie somewhat set me off. I tried to eat, and then I started for the Beeches. I heard my heart beat as my feet crunched the gravel of the drive. I lingered, and shut the gate carefully (it was always kept open), and then, being in sight of the windows, I could linger no longer. I was a well-known visitor, and the maid who came to the door said the young ladies weren't down yet. I did not want the young ladies—I

wanted Mrs. Bingham. (What a falsehood! I did want one of the young ladies, and I certainly did not want Mrs. Bingham.) I followed the maid into the drawing-room, and there Mrs. Bingham sat. I should have said she had a scowl on her face, only that I was about to ask for what (if given) would make even her scowls seem smiles to me. Then, for the first time, it struck me, how should I make her hear, for in the ardour of my love I had forgotten this. Making an offer through a trumpet would be very trying; besides, where was the trumpet this morning? We shook hands mutely. Then I drew a chair close and prepared for a shout.

'Mrs. Bingham, I've come on an important mission.'

'Missionaries?' said Mrs. Bingham.

I must be louder—I must say something that could not be mistaken for 'missionaries.' I began again.

'Mrs. Bingham, — perhaps you mayn't have noticed that I——'

The lady didn't, couldn't, wouldn't hear.

'Speak louder, Mr. Williams. I do not hear you very well this morning.'

Very well! Why she did not hear me at all; and as to speaking louder!—But there was no help for it.

'Mrs. Bingham,' I began the third time, 'I'm in love.'

The lady showed symptoms of hearing. She pricked up her ears, as all women will at the sound of 'love,' and a grim smile dawned on her face. (Surely she did not think I was going to propose to her!) She waited for me to go on, which I was hardly prepared to do. I should think never before had a man declared his love in such a vociferous manner. I almost wished I had gone to Lizzie straight,—but would not such a course have been contrary to intentions strictly honourable? This was more like driving the nail in, on the head. I had made plunge No. 1 now; plunge No. 2 would be less startling.

'I want your help,' I shouted. Mrs. Bingham heard again. Surely,

Cupid being blind, has some electric sympathy with the deaf. The gods befriended me.

'I know now,' I continued, 'that from my first meeting with Miss Lizzie I have loved her. Will you intercede for me? Do you think there is any hope?'

Mrs. Bingham rose from her chair erect.

'I have noticed your attachment,' she said, smiling grimly, 'and I think there is. Wait.'

'Dear Mrs. Bingham!'—I pressed her hand—a hand that was cold and hard to pressure—and she left me.

Gone to intercede. How I had wronged this kindhearted woman, and there was hope. It was doubtless (after the first) pleasant even to shout to Mrs. Bingham about my Lizzie, but to talk to the rose herself—how rapturous! How should I receive her? With the ground all prepared by Mrs. Bingham, would a kiss be too much? I trembled. I got up and looked in the mirror—a mirror that made my nose on one side and my eyes fishy. Was this my expression? I sat down and chirped to the canary bird: it was Elizabeth's canary. Never mind—anything to pass the time. Then I heard footsteps. Could a heart come out? If so, mine would. 'Be still, oh heart!' says somebody—I said it. They had reached the door—the handle turned, and there entered Mrs. Bingham and her daughter Elizabeth. How unnecessary! But the mother spoke.

'I told you, Mr. Williams, I thought you might hope. I was not wrong. My child Elizabeth (don't blush, my dear) confesses that she, too, has loved you from the first. Marriages, they say, are made in heaven—may it bless yours!'

She fixed me with her eyes, and left us together.

Oh misery!—helplessness! I collapsed. I looked at Elizabeth. I felt I hated her. She stood by the fire looking evidently expectant. Expectant of what? Oh, miserable man! There seemed a timidity on the part of Mahomet about approaching the mountain—therefore—

'Dear Mr. Williams,' said the mountain, 'don't you feel well?'

'No, ill—wretchedly ill.'

'Can't I do anything for you?'

By other lips what sweet words; but by hers—torture!

'No thank you—not anything.'

'Mamma has told me,' continued Elizabeth, seeing Mahomet was still timid, 'how you liked me the first day you came to dinner—don't you remember?'

I groaned.

'I am afraid you are suffering—the party last night—' she stopped (was it supposed the champagne had disagreed with me?)

'I think I had better go,' I said, goaded to desperation.

'Better!' (reproachfully.) 'Why better? Let us nurse you—that is if you love me. Don't you love me?'

How would any one else have answered?

'Oh yes—yes!' I replied despairingly.

Her face brightened.

'And yet you will go?'

'I won't inflict my misery on you.'

'Misery! Oh, John!'

'I shall see you again soon,' I said, preparing to leave the room.

'But your hat,' said Elizabeth, seeing it lying neglected behind.

'Hat!—what hat?'

She handed it—I put it on and banged in the top, Elizabeth evidently thinking I was on the way to a brain fever. She came to the hall door with me, and surveyed the landscape o'er. I don't know what she saw—to me there were ashes on the flower-beds, and the trees wore sackcloth. She came down the drive with me.

'Good-bye, dear John,' she said; 'you have made me so happy.' She held up her pale face, and I had to do it. My lips felt like Dead Sea apples—I don't know if she thought so; I dare say not. Of course I

loved her, or else why had I just made her an offer. She could not come out with me on the road, thank Heaven! she had no bonnet on, so she stood by the gate watching me. I felt it, but I never looked back.

I did not see Lizzie again, she left (or was sent home?) the next day, when I was lying ill and helpless. Then the Binghams invaded my lodgings (taking advantage of my weakness), which helped to retard my recovery. When I once began to get better, with daily increasing strength came renewed hope—but it was too late. One cold wintry day I heard of Lizzie's approaching marriage with that jolly fellow Percy Langton; and if, after this, there was any struggle against my fate, it was a struggle without energy. My mother came down to me, and came out strong, but Mrs. Bingham came out stronger by succumbing to her, and I was like a figure, pulled by strings, at these good ladies' will. Elizabeth was meek and submissive to my mother. She wore dingy garments, and adored Dr. Watts; she maintained her position during the Creed, and could make a rice pudding. If I did not love her, I ought to do so, or there must be something very wrong with me. Indeed, there was something wrong with me—I was bitter, disgusted, dissatisfied, and in that frame of mind I was brought to the altar.

An Englishman's home is his castle. Quick, take up the drawbridge, and let no spy enter into mine.

Draw your own conclusions from what I have told you, but don't expect any key to such conclusions from me—I durst not give it you. Only, they say marriages are made—somewhere! Mine was not!



LONDON SOCIETY.

AUGUST, 1866.

GOING OUT OF TOWN.

VERYBODY must go out of town. The only question asked about the middle of July is, when and where you are going: for, the idea of not going at all it were an impertinence to hint to you, and more than your respectability is worth for one moment to admit. There is plenty to remind you: queer loads of family luggage, always with baths; bundles, fishing-rods, and make-shift packages of all kinds are ever driving by your door, as of people going; long ladders, whitewash, and symptoms of a general turn-out, and long arrears of cleaning, speak of persons gone. Add to this, the parks are

grown monotonous; all the fashionables have grown quite common; the pavement is hot, and the trees in the squares quite dusty; and even Nature looks shabby, and the flowers in the balconies can keep up false appearances no longer.

All this causes a sensation of being left in the lurch, and all the more dull because others are making holiday. Every newspaper is full of advertisements, most tempting, till you have been so deluded as to spend time and money upon the representation, of charming places to go to—summer paradises by description, but very dustholes in fact. The country, you think, must be shady, cool, and refreshing; and you find a place dark and fusty, with plenty of the heat, but little indeed of the air of summer. 'This will never do,' you say; 'London is cool to this: what an imposition! But, then, how can I believe advertisements, or how find any house without.'

'Then I understand, sir, you want,' says a house-agent, 'a good family-house, price moderate, near a station, on the banks of the Thames—sloping lawn, with boating and fishing. Why, all London want that, sir; and as to price, City people don't stand about a ten-pound note—only once a year—pay for their whistle, all of them.'

Whereupon you look further down the list. 'Here, sir,' he said to us; 'this house the Rev. ——— wants to let: he used to give his house for a curate—a substitute for six weeks; but the last had the scarlet fever in the house. Quite safe by this time, sir; for a whole year since, and no one caught it. Or, stay, here is another house quite safe—but you have children, did you not say, sir?—very sorry; he writes "no children" in his letter; and I am to be on my guard against convalescents. But then this is the very thing—Good house, well-stocked garden, and use of a cow, &c.; price only four guineas a week.'

'But what advantages?'

'Why, you don't pay for advantages. Situation retired—but you don't leave London for society, you know, sir—Salisbury Plain; easy walk to Stonehenge.'

I soon found that we must extend our distance, raise our price, and limit our desires. All the requisites on which we had set our mind perhaps never yet had met together; and as Uncle Robert proposed to join, and the girls knew he would pay for lots of treats, we at last found boating and fishing, or what was called such, with a railway near, with a lawn for croquet, and a field for archery. Indeed it was quite a relief to find so much together, coming just at the time we despaired of finding any house at all.

Uncle Robert became quite public-spirited: he saw advertised 'a pony, harness, and basket-carriage, all complete, the property of a lady, who would accept moderate terms of a kind master.' This he said he could buy and sell again—a cheap way of hiring—and we should have fine fun about the lanes.

We were now all in high spirits: we should be so 'jolly,' and so much enjoy a little rational country recreation. The house was to be all cleaned up and ready for us: but the day we arrived there was a gate wide open, the gardener had gone off to the public-house, a great litter of straw proclaimed that we had almost trodden on the heels of the departing tenants. The one maid left in the house looked much out of heart, and yet more out of temper. She was entrusted with the inventory, assisted by a clerk in the village; and going over the inventory, when too old to coincide with later cracks, chips, and deficiencies, is no very satisfactory operation after a journey; though meanwhile the boys began to put to their fishing-rods, and our girls began to set their croquet; for all young people think, if they only take care of their own impulsive selves and amusements, that everything else—with the help of papa and mamma—will of course go right of itself.

Luckily we had brought a basket of cold pie and chickens, or we should have gone hungry to bed that night. We were four miles from the town; and 'Please, sir, how about going to market? Master used to be obliged to keep a tax-cart on purpose;'—the reason master was so long in letting this out-of-the-way and most inconvenient place. Then there was only one farmer—and he very grumpy and independent—who would sell the house milk; but the milk 'he would not sell anybody who did not also take his butter,—such stuff! one would think he made it bad on purpose.'

'Then how did your master manage?'

'Oh, master kept a cow: but the cow isn't in your rent; the last family used it so bad—they were for everlasting a milking of it.'

For the meat, there was the village butcher; but most people sent to the town. Here was one use for the basket carriage, certainly! But I began to consider that my wife had promised herself a little holiday from the tedious severities of house-keeping; and now her difficulties were likely to keep her domestic economies at full stretch; and—worse and worse!—she said she apprehended quite a mutiny among the servants: they said they never saw such an outlandish place, and had they known what barn-door savages the people were, they would never have come.

Our troubles seemed serious; for, my wife and I are bad travellers; and, if we have a weakness, it is about a clean house and no fusty smells. Must I confess that our first week was a week of soap and soda, of charwomen and scrubbing-brushes? and two large crates of kitchen and other articles fit to use we were obliged to send for to our house in town.

Meanwhile Uncle Robert, who never liked to acknowledge a bad bargain, used to come home very hot, after flogging 'that brute of a pony!' After those drives we used to tell him, as he looked very savage and out of temper, that he was a very bad personation of 'the kind

master' specified in that very tempting advertisement.

However, by the end of the week—though this first week went very unlike the healthful holiday and recreation we came for—we had settled down and were ready to look about ourselves in quest of all the pleasure and rural felicity that we had set our minds upon.

How about the boating? Why, six miles down the river lived a man who let out boats: but mamma heard there had been an accident, which made her nervous, as the boys could not swim. However, I thought it would be foolish not to have a boat, now that we had paid higher rent for being near the river; so Uncle Robert flogged Gyp—so we called the pony, declaring it was stolen by Gipsies, and would be claimed, to uncle's great confusion—he flogged Gyp over to the ferry-house; and a boat was announced as at the bottom of our washerwoman's garden, and ready at command by the end of the first week. But even then we were three-quarters of a mile from the said boat, and that was as far as we cared to walk; and what with rain and leakage the boat was never quite ready, and always dirty from some one who had used it on the sly, when we reached it. Then those horrid locks were in the way, and only a mile from one to the other; and such a stream! we were—that is, Uncle Robert and I were (as the boys were not strong enough to do much good)—an hour rowing one way, and not ten minutes floating down the other, so like the rest of life, in which we have our labouring by the hour, but our pleasures doled out by the minute; and we came in so hot, we were afraid of rheumatism—and this was the first and the last of our amateur watering. True, I did boast of having been a good rower at College; but times are altered; for now I leaked at every pore, and blew like a porpoise. So we said that we would put the rowing off on the gardener and a man he said he could find in the village; but, of course, the man was scarcely ever in the way when we were in the mood for a water-

party; so we did not use the boat six times in all—and never really enjoyed it once.

Nature designed man for business, not for pleasure—for taking his part in the game of life with his fellow-creatures, and not for being taken up with himself alone for many weeks together. So, true to this scheme of Providence, two months proves to be a very long time for our own private and solitary gratification alone. The choice morsels and dainties of life depend upon your zest for them; and you can no more make pleasant days, than nice dinners follow each other, without doing something for an appetite.

What was to be done? Croquet, with no young men and pretty girls to flirt with; no gathering of their young mothers, for men like myself to lounge with on the lawn—for there is a sort of post-marital flirting for which we never grow too old—Croquet for its own sake, like dancing for its own sake, is absurd, of course; so the balls and mallets lay idle in the summer-house; and, after I had almost broken my shins over the arches, the croquet was as dead a letter almost as the boats.

But the fishing? Where there is a river we imagine there must be fishing; but not necessarily the fishing that catches anything. We had been to Farlow's shop, and bought all sorts of ingenious baits—the spoon-bait included; though it only served as an interminable subject of Uncle Robert's puns, who said the fish would take it for a mirror, and see their noses in it; and they were the *spoons* who believed otherwise. Only, the water at one time was too low; at another, too high. Without a boat, and skilful spinning and boating together, under the weirs and in the mill-stream, you would never find yourself in the same parish with an old Thames trout. For the pike it was too early; and for all other fish—save a few gudgeons, and they very scarce—it was quite the wrong place. In short, we had yet to learn that whoever stows fishing-rods and baskets among his luggage for the two hottest summer months, virtually announces to every true Waltonian,

that he knows very little about the matter.

Fortunately, it took us nearly five weeks to find this out—or, as Uncle Robert said, ‘to prove an *alibi*’ for the fish wherever we put in our line; so we had the pleasures of hope all the time. Certainly there must be good fishing, because there was here ‘the Fishery Inn,’ and ‘Parties accommodated with punts, baits, and expert fishermen’—all supposed to be of sufficient attraction to be advertised at all the tackle-shops in town. There was also most conspicuous in the passage of the said Fishery Inn, an eighteen-pound pike in a glass case: and ‘every man in the village told you of Squire A., or of Master Thomas B., who had done wonders. Indeed, the townpeople stood up most stoutly for the pretensions of their water; and one day, when I rather depreciated the place as a great fishing resort, the landlady said, ‘I suspect, sir, you are one of those gentlemen who are not very cute about catching of them.’

‘And had you no one to speak to all this time?’

‘My sympathetic friend, you shall hear.—For the first ten days, walking down to the post and there conning over the “Times,” was our chief resort. But there we scraped acquaintance with the parson—or rather the parson with us—for one of his parishioners “the most deserving,”—which means one who keeps off the poor rates—had lost a pig; and since every pig-keeper calculates that no pig, of course, has any business to die till the proper time for taking his bacon degree, this was a great disappointment—so the parson came round for a subscription. We could not decently refuse a fair contingent, and of course we had a little gossip in the way of discount; but our ideas and topics had little in common. When he met me, he bored me about church questions, and the only one I at all understood was about shortening the services, as soon as it could be done constitutionally, and shortening the sermons without more delay: so we were sorry companions, at the best.

‘All this time it was not constant sunshine. We were shut up in the house by two very wet days, and the beautiful trees they boast of in a country-house we found could look very dank and dripping in bad weather. Nature’s beauties are sublime, no doubt: but you can’t look at one set of trees for ever; and I am sure that a cabstand before my window all these two days would have been a sensible relief.

‘But, after ten days, Aunt Betty, hearing we had a spare room, came for change of air, and especially for the good of her nerves—poor blind mortals that we are!—for little did these nerves know what were in store for them. The first proposal was a morning drive at walking pace with Uncle Robert,—“But was the pony steady?” Steady, indeed! we all laughed at the idea—I had driven the brute, and said there wasn’t a kick belonging to it—you might as well flog a rhinoceros, or expect any runaway adventure from a cow! But one day the pony looked to me more lively. I saw a shake of the head, and that kind of look-round in the stall, which made me think that the corn was improving him; and, as our friends the Wakes proved to have found out-of-town quarters, about seven miles off, my wife and I, with Robert and Aunt Betty, agreed to start in the basket-carriage, to spend the afternoon with them.

‘As soon as I had seated myself, with my back to the horse, feeling the dangerous nearness of my head to the heels of a kicker, I expressed some natural hopes and fears to Robert, which he answered only with a laugh at the bare suggestion of the thing; but, before we had gone three hundred yards, the pony seemed quite another animal, and a very vicious animal, too. I jumped up in a hurry—his heels came flashing just where my head had been—crack, crack, crack was the sound, as he was evidently kicking to kick himself free. Robert was at too long a pull for the reins to be of any use. I staggered out and fell with one foot under the wheel—Robert was shot, like a sack, into

the ditch—my wife jumped into my arms—for, luckily, I was hobbling up in an instant; but poor Aunt Betty was thrown bleeding on the gravel, while the pony, with the trap, went furiously kicking down the road.

'This adventure made a variety, at all events, and that was worth something. The doctor—who proved a pleasant fellow, and something of a philosopher, too—said that Aunt Betty was not very bad; whereupon Uncle Robert, who always makes the best of everything, proceeded to maintain that there was nothing like a good shaking to do some people good; and while Betty was employed about plastering up her elbow she would forget all about her nerves. This theory the doctor did not use many words to qualify: for part of a doctor's business is to indulge all the family in a good talk, and, to say the truth, at this particular time, we had as much talking-power wanting vent as we ever had in our lives. However, Aunt Betty was the subject of kind inquiries for a week from the ladies of a neighbouring family, who called with most sympathetic attention; so, we began to feel a little more at home. The "safe and quiet pony" proved, on inquiry, to have been sold as an inveterate kicker—though kickers do not always begin their old pranks till they are used to a new place.

'From the doctor we learnt a little of the locality. "Out-of-towners" (I learnt that word from him), he said, "have been quite a study to me for years past: they are a class of patients by whom I do a good deal of business in some seasons, and if they stayed a little longer, I should do more still in another way."

"How so, doctor?"

"Why, they come down with one set of complaints, and if they only remained long enough, would, most of them, set up another. They come down here—the younger ones used up by the London season, and the fathers and mothers by the dinner-parties. There's Mrs. Whitchard, of Tyburnia—she declared to me she had been living on

ice-puddings, sweetbreads, and side-dishes for eight weeks together."

"But what complaints are people likely to catch here?"

"Why, compare your life, sir, these last three weeks, with your life in London. There, you say, you eat a cheerful breakfast, are off to the City—have no time, or care, either, for more than a sandwich, or what nature requires, at mid-day, and come home to eat your dinner with a hearty appetite. Death, in the old story, could not catch the Cambridge carrier while on the jog, but he died the first idle day. Very true to nature, that story is—and you, sir, what is your way of living just now?"

"I plead guilty: I am nibbling at the fruit at all hours; I am smoking from sheer idleness; and looking forward to luncheon for something to do."

"Yes, that's the way idle men dig their graves with their teeth—men forget they can eat themselves to death as well as drink themselves. But as to your mind, sir? Are you not now fidgeted by little things as much as you used to be with great?—Which is more trying to your constitution, do you think, 'to be eaten up by rust,' or 'scoured to pieces by perpetual motion?'"

"But what are you driving at, doctor? Is all this out-of-towning a physical mistake? Had a City man better go on work, work, work all the year round?"

"Certainly not. But you were complaining of the place being dull and stupid. The truth is, the best place for a fortnight, is the worst possible place for a month. I have looked on and watched you sauntering to the post-office, gazing at the geese upon the common, and looking unutterable things at the lazy-pacing minutes on your watch. Yours, my dear sir, is the old mistake: people come down here after pleasure; but it is the very nature of pleasure to come after us, when we find it at all: and you out-of-towners want such an unconscionable quantity of pleasure to keep you going—with nothing else—as long as your rent is running out."

'I was soon persuaded of the pro-

priety of finding some little business worth running up to London for, so as to break the monotony. But though I was "within sound of the railway," I was six miles from a station—there was another cheat in the advertisement.

"But the children," I said; "doctor, what will they do?"

"Oh, leave them alone. Nature is kinder and more considerate of children a great deal. Life is new to them. The parson's children will suit them, though I suppose the parson himself does not particularly well suit you."

The doctor soon after remarked, "Letting houses in the season has become quite a business in this part of the country ever since our railway was made; and if it were not for the worry people had with their servants, or some little ailments to consult me about—the week it takes to get to right, and the other week it takes to prepare for breaking up, disputing about the breakages and the inventory, and otherwise squabbling with the landlord, as well as directions for reopening their own house in town—without all this—bless me! people could never stand two months of it. To pass many days and weeks together all smooth and all pleasure, with no emphasis at all on the prosy sentence of life—this would be, like a cake all plums, too sickening to enjoy. So, I always observe that when men cannot find themselves anything to do, the course of this world finds something for them. For, while you can only avoid downright insipidity—that vacuum

by nature most abhorred—I consider a few plagues as the next greatest blessing to real pleasures. The end of it is that the said out-of-towning answers its purpose. Certainly, it is always very different from what people promise themselves; but isn't all life the same, chapter after chapter, from the cradle to the grave? And people are generally very glad to get back to home-comforts and their usual employments; and next year another set fill the same houses, and with much the same complaints;—for it is very rarely we ever see the same party twice—not that they are quite so certain to better themselves elsewhere: only they have sounded the depths of this, and they could hardly practise the same imposition upon themselves, however sanguine, at another out-of-towning unless they tried it on at some other boating, fishing, or otherwise tempting situation."

Here was the philosophy of the whole matter. My experience, season after season, has completely coincided with the views of my observing friend; and I yet further agree with him, that while a man can keep on going pretty comfortably in this life, he need not be particular about being wiser than other people, or trouble himself too curiously about the why or the wherefore of those customary vagaries—perhaps the best, after all, of which circumstances admit—by which we all try to be happy the best way we can.



BATHING WITH AN EMPEROR.

' There we lay,
All the day,
In the Bay of Biscay, eh ?

OTTED round
the coast of
Great Britain
are innumera-
ble watering-
places, the in-
habitants of
which draw
their yearly
income from
out the pock-
ets of credu-
lous townsmen

men who, induced by the belief that the sea breezes and fresh shrimps for breakfast every morning are the very things to set them up for another eleven months' toil, make a point of spending a few weeks of each summer at some seaside town or village. Well for them if it is a village they choose, where shingle and sand, tar, fresh herrings, and tobacco, are the staple commodities, for then they do stand a chance of getting a morning dip in the clear green sea, and a pure 'sniff of the briny,' but alas for them if they choose a fashionable watering-place, where the sea-breeze brings with it a cloud of smoke from Victoria crescent, or a rush of 'blacks' from Regina square! Alas for them if they select a spot where beach gives way to promenade, and where pepper-and-salt suits are unknown! To walk slowly up and down a gravelled walk, with the sea on one side, a row of houses on the other, and a band at each end, with nothing to do but to observe the costume of your fellow-creatures, and try to feel an interest in the 'Mary Anne' of Goole labouring outside the harbour, is doubtless to many more enjoyable than to sprawl on a pebbly beach, and lazily watch the ripples of an incoming tide, wondering vaguely and listlessly how long you may maintain your position without getting wet. But happily for the well-being of the world, every one does not think alike, and kindly railway companies are equally ready to transport me to a wild little Scotch fishing-village, or you, my reader, to the gay and festive Scarborough, at the lowest possible fares.

Our neighbours across the Channel are more given than we are to indulge in promenading. A French gentleman, a good walker, is a rarity, and the French ladies, if they cannot ride, stop at home. A watering-place to them needs no further attraction than that other people go there, that there are some good cafés, and a well-conducted casino. This being ascertained, they will go and spend a few days at Dieppe or Trouville, sitting on chairs on the beach, listening to the band, eating ices, and occasionally sauntering half a mile; but for aristocratic France, the queen of all watering-places is Biarritz, not so much on account of any special beauty in the place or any marvellous conveniences for bathing, but simply because it is patronised by the Emperor—you remember how a certain gentleman raised Brighton out of a fishing-village—and is fashionable and expensive.

Perhaps, few places so well known by name, have been so little visited by the English as Biarritz. Certainly seven hundred and fifty miles is a considerable distance to go for a sea bath, still it is possible to reach it from London in forty hours, or even less; and for a fashionable bathing-place, it is the most charming that it has ever been the good fortune of the writer to visit. Its situation is delightful; the view of the Pyrenees, and the

numerous inlets of the Spanish coast, the wide-spreading Bay of Biscay, the picturesquely dotted houses and white spired church, as seen from the lighthouse is beautiful; while life and society in this last nook of France, is a never-failing stock of amusement to the foreign tourist. From the sea the town itself is not visible, and Biarritz shows but as a small place—in truth it is not very large—with a large white building at one end of the bay, which is the casino, where music, cards, dancing, theatrical representations, and concerts, amuse the visitors in the evening, and at the other extremity a substantial modest-looking red brick house, which is the residence of His Imperial Majesty Napoleon III., when he visits Biarritz, and is known as the Villa Eugénie. It makes little show, and but for the sentry the traveller might pass it by unnoticed. The town proper is situated in a little valley and contains a fair amount of shops, an unfair number of lodging houses, a few cafés, and several small hotels, the larger and better being situate where a sea view is obtainable. This one long street of Biarritz is gay and crowded as a fair during a summer's evening. The shops are brilliantly illuminated, and sparkle and glitter in all the glory of jewellery, and other prettinesses; outside the cafés every seat is taken, ices are in great demand, and a lightly, gaily-dressed crowd of visitors saunter through the street, glancing at the jewellers', staring in at the old curiosity shop, where quaint china monsters, inlaid tea-trays, elaborate fans, and antique gems are to be purchased; wondering at the Turkish gentleman who, in the costume of his country, smokes his cigarette at his shop door, resplendent in baggy trousers and crimson fez; marvelling at the 'true Chinese,' as the notice over the shop door proclaims him to be, who, with pigtail and costume complete, nods with an energy worthy of a mandarin, and strives to look like a native of Pekin instead of Paris; delighting in the performing monkey, or dancing dogs, which some bold speculator has brought so far on the chance of earning a few sous from an

open-air audience; and at the same time laughing, joking, flirting, and smoking amongst themselves. In addition to the shops there are stalls erected beneath the trees, where walking sticks, carved ivory, and other necessities of life may be bought, and about these cluster masses of the visitors. Crack, crack, crack, goes a long thonged whip — 'Gar-r-r — Houp — Houp!' cries the driver, and dashing through the crowd comes the last conveyance from Bayonne, just stopping short of running over some twenty or thirty men and women, who stand still and shriek, partly in fear partly in pleasure. Then ensues a conversation on which you might be led to believe by the earnestness and gesticulation that the life of one of the speakers depended, and after that the driver and his friends adjourn to a neighbouring café, the coach is dragged into the yard, the horses are taken out, and the people crowd round the stalls again.

By this time the moon has risen, the air sighs through the streets soft and balmy, and ever and anon comes the sound of the rising tide as it laps upon the sand or roars in the rocky cavities of the bay. Then faintly in the distance sounds the band of the casino, and towards it flock the majority of the visitors to lounge upon the broad terrace facing the sea, to read the news of the day, to scan the list of fresh arrivals, but above all to see and be seen. What becomes of the visitors in the morning is a mystery. During the early part of the day the streets are deserted, the bathing-places are but little frequented, and the shore has no strollers. The jingle of a piano, or a glimpse of a negligently-dressed lounging figure, however, show that the quiet houses with their closed shutters, are not untenanted, however much their dreary look may lead one to suppose such to be the case.

The writer upon one memorable occasion visited one of the best known of Welsh watering-places, in the month of March, and never will he forget the desolate, dismal, deserted appearance of the fashionable town. The chief hotels looked like

soldierless barracks, the hot baths were being painted, the lodging-houses were shut up, the bathing-machines and pleasure boats were stowed away beneath sheds, the railway station was inhabited by a hermit, and the shop shutters were up, giving the idea of a plague-stricken town, which notion was strengthened by the absence of all visible population. The morning and early afternoon at Biarritz gives a somewhat similar idea, so quiet are the streets, so scarce the strollers, so few the bathers, but the heat is sufficient excuse for idleness, and none but English tourists, salamanders, and negroes, would care unnecessarily to roam about beneath the blazing sun in the early part of the day during the months of August or September in this fashionable southern watering-place. But towards five o'clock the visitors emerge from their shady retreats where they have probably been dozing, skimming light literature, and sipping iced drinks, for five or six hours, and make their appearance on the sands and at the various bathing-places.

The principal of these bathing-places are called the Côte des Basques, the Port Vieux, and the Côte Napoléon. The Port Vieux is a narrow inlet much frequented by swimmers, while the bay known as the Côte Napoléon, is patronised more by those whose powers of natation are limited, but who yet desire to enjoy the pleasure of a dip in the salt sea or a plunge amongst the waves of the Bay of Biscay, which in that spot they can do with perfect safety. At one extremity of the Côte Napoléon stands the villa Eugénie, while facing it at the other is the white-faced casino. Down upon the sand near to the casino is the bathing establishment—a long, low, somewhat gaudily-painted building of a mock Moorish pattern, and into this imposing edifice enter, at opposite ends, ladies and gentlemen dressed in the very extreme of fashion, to emerge in a short time more plainly than elegantly clad for the water. The ladies' attire consists of tunic and trousers, sometimes fancifully and tastefully embroidered and decorated; while the gentlemen

make their appearance in somewhat similar articles, of a stripy, faded, washed-out, loose, and incongruous nature. It requires at first no little *sang froid* to walk thus attired for two or three hundred yards, through a crowd of lounging belles and beaux seated or strolling on the sands, who congregate together and make critical remarks concerning you as you pass; but it is an ordeal to which all bathers, both male and female, must submit before they can take the water at Biarritz; and as use is second nature, the novelty speedily wears off, and the promenade is treated as a matter of course, and stare is returned for stare, and criticism for criticism.

The various methods in which different bathers choose to enter the sea are well worthy of note by all who desire to enjoy a hearty laugh. The smooth sandy shore slopes very gradually, and bathers may proceed to a considerable distance without being out of their depth, though even on a calm day the waves roll in at times with considerable force. In entering the water the favourite style with young France is a skip and a jump, a run, a leap over two or three ripples, a splash, and a retreat, then a cautious advance and a species of wild dance, as if the bather were performing the can-can with a wave for a partner, and finally, a terrific plunge into three feet of water; middle-aged France, conscious of the buoyant nature of fat, walks with elephantine tread some little distance into the sea, throws himself upon his back, and floats placidly and contentedly till a wave washes him up amongst the promenaders on the shore, and leaves him there prostrate, high and dry, when he rises and repeats the performance. Ladies trip lightly down the shore to the water's edge, throw aside the dainty little slippers they have worn over the loose, dry, gritty sand, which, fine and soft though it be, irritates bare feet not a little, and then not unfrequently stand while an attendant empties a bucketful of water over their heads preparatory to their crossing the boundary of king Neptune's domains. A favourite amusement amongst the bathers at

the Côte Napoléon is, to form into line, ladies and gentlemen holding each other's hands, and then advance boldly towards the rolling waves. Just as the white crest towers above them, all spring upwards and are borne in by the advancing tide. Naturally some are unfortunate and do not make their leap in time, but the great object is to keep the chain of linked hands unbroken, and those who first regain their feet on the soft, firm sand, assist in righting their less fortunate companions; but should a second wave follow close upon the heels of the first, probably the whole party are rolled ignominiously over, and after a few seconds come panting and dripping to their feet. This pastime is attended with no danger, for the water is shallow and the beach shelving, while, moreover, a boat is stationed throughout the day at a certain distance from the shore, to prevent even good swimmers going beyond a particular point, ready at a moment's notice to proceed to the assistance of any bather who may have imprudently ventured out of his depth. The scene in this bay any fine autumn afternoon is one of great beauty, especially when the rays of the setting sun lend their glory to it, reddening the pine woods, lighting up the picturesquely-grouped houses, and crimsoning the rocks; but for those who would see a sunset in all its splendour, there is a mound behind the church from which may be viewed a glorious expanse of sea, and an almost illimitable range of mountains standing out in solemn purple against the crimson-barred golden sky, as the sun sinks into the ocean, sending a last rich, glittering, quivering path of glory across the sea.

The Port Vieux, an inlet of the sea, small in comparison with the bay known as the Côte Napoléon, is the bathing-place frequented by swimmers, and so crowded is it at times, that a novice stands a fair chance of being jostled out of the water. Here ladies and gentlemen swim, dive, and gambol together like a shoal of porpoises, but the shore slopes somewhat steeply, soon leading to deep water, consequently the non-swimmers do not much

patronise this bay. As the dinner-hour draws near, the sea is deserted; men and women, with dripping, tight-clinging garments, rush in haste to the Moorish shed or the Swiss chalet, to don their land garb; the boats which have tossed up and down all day upon the waves, anxiously longing to proceed to somebody's rescue, are pulled in to shore; the money-takers at the bathing-houses close their little windows and count up their francs; the bathing-dresses are hung out to dry by the hundred; the promenaders go home to their hotels; twilight gives way with marvellous rapidity to darkness, and silence reigns alike in the Côte Napoléon and the Port Vieux, for Biarritz is at dinner.

Bathing, promenading, lounging, eating, drinking, and smoking, pass away the hours of the visitors at the Empress's watering-place, and for those who are content to fill up their days with such amusements, Biarritz is perfection; but in the matter of excursions, walks, or drives, it is decidedly badly off. The railway takes adventurous travellers into Spain in a very short time, concerning which trip I hope to say a few words on some future occasion; and the coaches convey them to Bayonne, where, to all appearance, one half the visitors at Biarritz pass their days, going in in the morning and not returning till dusk; indeed, so sought after are the places in the morning conveyances, that though coaches, omnibuses, and breaks start every quarter of an hour, to secure a seat it is necessary to book it at least on the previous afternoon.

Certainly there is some excuse for this, for there are few towns calculated to impress a traveller more favourably than Bayonne, when seen on a bright, clear, sunshiny day. Half French, half Spanish, its shops and hotels, with inscriptions in both languages; its gay, bright, bustling, busy streets; its crowd of pedestrians, ladies in the latest Paris fashions, Spanish contrabandists, picturesquely-attired priests, soldiers, nuns, and tourists; its splendid Place de Grammont; its venerable cathedral, and, above all, the view from its citadel, with the distant Pyrenees,

equalling if not exceeding in beauty the famed panorama of the Bernese Alps from Thun, make Bayonne a far from unpleasant place to visit; while, once free of the town, the calm, fertile landscape through which the river Adour flows, with a background of distant mountains, is exquisitely charming. No wonder the five-mile ride to this town from Biarritz is a favourite one, the more especially as on French territory the only other interesting excursion to be made is to the lighthouse. Thither, in carriages, on foot, on horse or donkey back, go at least once during their stay all visitors at Biarritz, and there are but few, I think, who, if they choose a clear day for their excursion, can come away dissatisfied. The sea view is magnificent, while the panorama of ocean and mountain looking towards Spain can hardly be surpassed. Further along the coast, in the direction of Bayonne, is a cave, which, in itself, presents no very great feature of interest, though the legend attached to it may please the sentimental. It is called the *Chambre d'Amour*, and the story goes that in it two lovers were surprised by the rising tide, and were drowned in each other's arms. 'Poor things!' say the fashionable visitors, as they seat themselves to picnic near the romantic spot, and the death agony of two of their fellow creatures is soon forgotten in the popping of champagne corks and the merry laughter of the happy sight-seers who have gone there for a day's pleasure, and have no idea of allowing any sombre reflections to mar their jollity.

With a good deal of sleeping, a modicum of strolling, a vast amount of lounging, a fair proportion of bathing, and a minimum of real exercise, the fashionable visitors at Biarritz get through the day, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that, while pretending to be engaged in amusing themselves, the day slips by them; still there are few yawning-bored people amongst the crowd on the beach on an autumn afternoon, for the scene is so gay and lively, the waves so crisp and green, the view so beautiful, the bathers so amusing, and the promenaders so

gaily attired, that the most listless loungeur can occupy his eyes and the vacuum where his brains should be, in staring at the fashionable crowd and speculating as to who they are, where they have found lodgings, and how many fresh comers the next break from Bayonne will bring in. Of course, too, there is a never-failing source of speculation and conversation respecting the royal bathers, anecdotes are retailed, true if possible, but better than none, the inventions of fertile brains, respecting the Empress, and never-ceasing stories of the progress of the Prince Imperial in the art of swimming at the Port Vieux, pass from mouth to mouth; and then, when the man who holds the reins of France so firmly in his hands, strolls on the sand accompanied by his wife and child, just as you, Mr. and Mrs. Paterfamilias, do with little Johnny, hats are raised and he passes on his way without state or ceremony of any kind, mixing with the people and talking to acquaintances, sinking the Emperor in the private gentleman. Alas for the explosion of the old ideas that sovereigns never moved without crowns upon their heads, and that trains of velvet supported by pink-legged pages were the adjuncts to empresses, for at least fourteen hours in the day, if they were not permanently attached to them in lieu of those singular appendages which, Lord Monboddo believed, formed a part of man in his natural state! The illusion has all but died out, and kings and queens after all are found to be only men and women.

When Biarritz was a tiny fishing village, before royalty discovered it and raised it to its present position, the Port Vieux, instead of being a public swimming bath, was an inlet sheltering the few boats the little place owned, now those boats have disappeared; but vessels are occasionally driven by stress of weather towards Biarritz, running always the risk of being dashed in pieces on the cruel rocks which crop up from out the water in every direction—rocks in which the sea has worn holes and caverns, to bubble and boil and surge in—rocks over which the waves dash in clouds of blinding

spray—rocks which look pleasant and picturesque on a summer's day seen from the shore, with the surf whitening their bases, but which must present a terrible appearance on a tempestuous winter night when seen from the deck of a ship driving before the wind full upon them. As yet there is no refuge for such distressed vessels, but a harbour is in the course of construction close to the Port Vieux.

It is a favourite exercise to stroll round the portion already built, and certainly it is well worth a visit independently of the scenery which surrounds it. It is formed principally of enormous blocks of concrete, made on the spot in huge wooden cases of fifteen cubic metres each, though stone as well has been largely used. During the gales of last winter the ocean, as if resenting the intrusion, destroyed much of the work, hurling huge broken masses of both stone and concrete back upon the shore; but the defects have been made good, and a white statue of the Virgin placed at the extremity is looked upon, not only as commemorative of the death of four labourers who were swept by a wave from the platform on which they were at work and perished in the sea, but also as an emblem of hope for the success of the undertaking.

Three things are necessary in going to Biarritz—time, inclination, and money, but once there, few I think could be disappointed. If mountain scenery be sought after, there are the Pyrenees; if sea view is

desired, there is the Bay of Biscay; if novelty, there is an easy trip into Spain; if gaiety, there is the beach and the casino. A pleasant, idle, lounging, ice-eating, coffee-sipping, cigarette-smoking, sea-bathing time may be spent there; a heated, panting, umbrella covered, thirsty time may be passed there; a merry, jovial, happy time may be frittered away there; and lastly, the lion hunting traveller may have the supreme felicity of plunging into the same wave with royalty, or of watching the kicks and plunges of the heir to the crown of the finest empire in the world, as he takes his first lessons in swimming.

A pleasant run through France, with a short stay in Paris, an inspection of the cathedral at Tours, a visit to the city of Bordeaux, with its fine bridge over the Gironde, its magnificent theatre, and its grand quays and public buildings, a railway trip through the curious department of the Landes, a glance at Bayonne, a five-mile omnibus ride, and Biarritz is gained after a journey which, if not too hurried, will not be the least pleasant recollection the traveller will bring home with him when he returns from his trip to the watering-place in the last nook of France, which the will of an Empress has transformed from an insignificant fishing village to a maritime town, and which, not being a capital, has perhaps been honoured by the presence of royalty above all others.



THE YACHTING SEASON.

THE fierce gales of winter which have strewn our shores with wrecks have at length been succeeded by the gentle breezes of summer. Storms, clouds, frosts, and a host of other evil genii, who had long held the earth in chains, have been scattered by the shafts of victorious Sol, and at his all-powerful command, Nature, awakening from the dead, begins to throb with life, and to pour joy and strength through every nerve and artery. Zephyr—to use the graceful symbolism of the ancients—is now wooing Flora; lawn and woodland are arrayed in their newest and richest robes; and even old Neptune sinks at noontide into a soft siesta, or glides peacefully over the calm waters, keeping holiday with his blithe and sportive train.

The business of pleasure now recommences, and activity begins to manifest itself throughout the pleasure fleets of England. The yacht is in general a mere butterfly of summer, and, unless she has been fortunate enough to have proceeded to the Mediterranean, has lain in a chrysalis state all the winter, herself dismantled and in the mud, and her stores housed on shore. But now she is put in commission for the season, and issues forth brave in bunting and bright in gold and colours. Constant scraping and painting and varnishing are necessary to produce and maintain her brilliant appearance, and 'fitting out' usually occupies a month or six weeks. Yachts are as various in size and equipment as the tastes and means of their owners, and range, from the stately queen-like vessel which sweeps over the high seas, and seems like a haughty beauty to keep the world at a distance, and own no connection with earthly dross, to the impudent little chits which thrust their noses into every creek and cranny along our coasts, and generally belong to the aspiring sons of our maritime towns.

We are always liable, in subjects with which we are but little acquainted, to class together a large

number of objects between which investigation would teach us to distinguish; and thus many conceive all yachts to be alike, whereas they are as different as the services in which they are employed. A racing yacht is long, deep, and narrow, carries heavy spars, and spreads a large amount of canvas: it is, consequently, scarcely safe in a heavy sea, and affords very indifferent accommodation in proportion to its size. Some able seaboats (such, for instance, as the Arrow) have occasionally carried off prizes, but they are too few to invalidate the rule, and have always been of large tonnage. A cruising yacht, on the contrary, is built with a broad beam and roomy cabins, with the view of carrying ample stores and standing rough weather, or, as sailors express it, of being a 'wholesome' craft. Such a vessel is suitable for fishing or shooting, but these recreations cannot be successfully engaged in at the same time with what is generally understood by yachting. Vessels intended for shooting expeditions fit out late in the autumn, carry light spars and storm canvas, and are provided with white boats and swivel guns. They proceed to certain points on the coast of England or Holland, or wherever sport is to be found, but, as may be imagined, it has to be purchased at the expense of considerable discomfort and of occasional danger. For fishing purposes a great number and variety of hooks and lines are requisite—for they are constantly being lost, and nearly every kind of fish requires a different kind of tackle—and nets of several descriptions, a seine and a trawl net being indispensable. Piscatorial enterprises are not suitable for those whose object is 'pleasuring.' You have to betake yourself to certain 'fishing grounds,' and remain there all day, and perhaps all night. You cannot, while on your way to France, while away the time by pulling up large turbot, or even little herrings, and if you attempt to work your nets, you must be content to appear at

the next port with little paint or varnish on your rails, and a large quantity of sea-wrack and refuse on your deck. Fish are not, as might be expected, scattered throughout all parts of the sea, but frequent a few localities well known to fishermen. It seems very strange that they should continue to congregate in places where they are constantly being disturbed by boats passing overhead, and by trawl beams sweeping up and down; but these localities have probably some advantages with regard to food and shelter which more than compensate for these discomforts. When I was last year at Guernsey I found that not a single mackerel could be taken on the north side of the port of St. Peter's, although whittings were there in abundance; nor a whiting on the south side, although it was very favourable for mackerel.

We perceive, then, from the above observations, that we cannot do two things at once at sea any more than on shore, and as yachts are various in kind, so are the tastes and habits of their owners. A racing man orders a craft to be built for the purpose of carrying off a prize. Everything is sacrificed to this object, the vessel is overmasted, and the floors, where shifting ballast is allowed, are covered with shot-bags. The yacht is then entered for the intended match; a crew is hired for the occasion; she sails, wins or loses; all is over in a few days, and the vessel is laid up and probably for sale. If she has been successful she brings a fancy price; if not, she is almost worthless, and must be sold for a song, or lie until she rots in a builder's yard.

Hence we learn that yachting of this kind is very different from cruising. A vessel intended for the latter purpose fits out early in the year, and its roomy cabins are provided with all the luxuries which are to be found in the best establishments on shore, and with such appliances as tend to render the sea, as far as comfort is concerned, as much like the land as possible. But although we are accustomed to say that money can do anything, it certainly cannot convert the 'restless

rolling deep' into terra firma, nor prevent the wanderers over its bosom from often feeling unpleasantly aware that they are not at home, but at sea. Every advantage has some counterbalancing drawback; we cannot obtain health in the salons of London, and must be content to forego some of the gratifications of sense, if we would enjoy fresh breezes and sublime scenery.

While upon this subject—although I cannot speak with the authority of a veteran yachtsman, having had but four years' experience—I think that I may be able to give a few useful hints to those now fitting out for the first time. Firstly, with respect to clothing, avoid thick, rough cloths, and wear a light jacket, keeping an overcoat for cold and a waterproof for wet weather. Beaver cloth is very good for all these purposes, but nothing heavier should be used, for thick materials, when once thoroughly wet, cannot be properly dried on board ship. All garments which are brought in contact with salt water remain damp for a long time, and even those which are not, become impregnated with the saline particles with which the sea air is laden, and are thus kept from drying by the humidity of the surrounding atmosphere.

When I went on my first yachting expedition, and dropped anchor for the first time at a fashionable watering-place, feeling a little natural pride at my new position, and observing some gorgeously-attired young ladies sailing up and down the pier, I descended at once into my cabin, from which I hoped to issue speedily in irreproachable costume; and as I am aware that many form their opinion of a gentleman, not exactly from his understanding, but from his boots, I determined to be faultless in this respect at least. Imagine the blow my vanity sustained when, on opening a locker, I found the pair on which my hopes depended perfectly white—white with mould—and covered with a fine soft fur, such as might have been a source of instruction to those who are fond of tracing the earliest developments of organic life. My con-

sternation was equally great at the means by which they were to be restored, namely, by washing them thoroughly in fresh water, especially as I felt assured that they would never again be perfectly dry during the rest of my summer cruise. Let no yachtsman therefore expect any success on shore who is not provided with canvas and patent-leather boots, and with drawers and cases lined with tin, for the preservation of all articles, especially such as are of leather, which are liable to be destroyed by damp.

Next, with regard to viands. It is very desirable to keep a stock of fresh eggs constantly on board. They will serve as good substitutes for milk or cream, which it is often difficult to procure, and will afford you (*vide* 'A Hundred Modes of Dressing Eggs') a great variety of palatable and nourishing dishes. Preserved meats and soups in cases, such as can best be obtained in Little Stanhope Street, Mayfair, should also be provided, not for constant use, but for cases of emergency. For want of a store of this description, I was obliged on one occasion, during a calm, to subsist for nearly two days on two herrings and some green potatoes, which the crew, although they would not eat them, had fortunately omitted to throw away. All kinds of meat can be obtained in tin cases, ready dressed, with vegetables and savoury sauces; and in bad weather, when even a sea cook finds it difficult to produce anything eatable, these little pots can be placed for a few minutes in the oven, and will furnish a meal fit for Epicurus. It will not, however, be necessary to have recourse to them very often, as in most places, though not in all, supplies of fresh meat can be obtained. Meat naturally suggests drink. In this respect the yachtsman has a great advantage over his brethren on shore. A voyage should by all means be made to the coast of France or to Jersey, where a plentiful supply can be laid in and drunk in all the ports of England free of duty. A bottle may be taken on shore, if it has been broached, but not otherwise. The custom-house

officers are very considerate to yachtsmen, and seldom overhaul our stores; and it is our duty to return the compliment, and retain the privilege by avoiding smuggling, and prohibiting it among our crews. While upon this subject I would remark that any wines of an explosive character should be kept upright, and racks should be fitted into the cellarets for this purpose, as the heat and the motion of the vessel greatly increase the power of the confined air. Owing to a neglect of this precaution, I was on one occasion startled by a report like a pistol-shot in my saloon, and on opening one of the wine lockers, found, to my dismay, that every bottle was empty. As I removed them one by one, it was a source of melancholy interest to me to observe how these 'dead men' had severally met their fate; some had been blown to pieces by a general explosion; some had been killed by a shot, having fired out their corks and their contents after them, leaving themselves beautifully dry; some had had their necks broken; some had been cut in half; while a few had lost their understandings—their bottoms having blown off so neatly, that while the upper part formed a glass shade, the lower, or 'kick,' might have been used for drinking, and would have been appreciated in the good old days when large capacity was an object, and it was treason to possess a glass which could be replaced before it was drained.

Having given these hints to masters, I must now in turn offer some advice to men. Yachtsmen are an unsatisfactory class—that is, they are, like many other mortals, fonder of pleasure than of work. I do not allude here to owners, but to sailors, although the latter are the victims of a system for which they are not themselves responsible. It has become the custom with many to live most extravagantly on board their yachts, and only to keep them in commission for a very limited period, during which they attend regattas and show hospitality to their friends, while their crews live most irregularly, and can hardly be expected to be careful and economical while

they are in the midst of waste and profusion. Another evil results from this: men are hired for these short carnivals without any inquiry being instituted into their characters; and while the owner overlooks any misconduct, thinking he can only suffer it for a very short time, the crew determine upon making as much and doing as little as possible during their temporary engagement. They are also sure of being soon again in employment; and one man whom I had on board last summer had sailed in seventeen yachts—one of which he wrecked—although he had been only ten years at sea. Fishermen and others who have been seldom, if ever, in yachts, will be found the most efficient hands; and for their instruction I have drawn up the following directions, which, being derived from experience, set forth the rights and immunities of yachtsmen more truly, though less humorously, than those of Swift did the privileges of servants.

I. If work be slack, and you hear of a yacht requiring a hand, row off to it at once, and jump on board. They will find some difficulty in dislodging you, and if you can hold your ground until the boat which brought you has got away, they will at least have some trouble in sending you back.

II. As soon as you are engaged, say that you are a married man, and have a wife and family living close by. It would be, under these circumstances, a violation of every law, human and divine, to prevent your going on shore every evening, and you need not trouble yourself to return in the morning before noon. N.B. In Christian countries Sunday is a holiday.

III. Should there be any intention of putting to sea, protest that the breeze is too strong for so small a craft, and that to do so would be highly dangerous. Mention this confidentially to any ladies who may happen to be on board. This stroke seldom fails, and insures the goodwill of the governor. Should there unfortunately be no ladies in the case, leave some necessary article on shore, and ask the captain just before

starting whether he requires it. You will thus have to be sent back again, and once on shore, you can remain until the tide is low.

IV. Never think of wearing any clothes left by another man; the idea is not only derogatory but disgusting. Say the old suit does not fit, and cannot be altered. While the new is being made always appear in a state of filth and semi-nudity. Make a point of standing during this period in a conspicuous position on the deck, especially if the governor has any lady friends coming to visit. They may, perhaps, be moved at the sight of your wretched condition. N.B. The old suit may come in handy for the winter.

V. Complain loudly of the hammocks; say the deck requires to be recaulked and the rigging renewed. Insist on an immense fire being kept up, and then say that the heat of the fore-castle is so great that you have taken cold from going on deck.

VI. Never do any work after breakfast; it is not the custom on board yachts. Never carry any parcels; such work is only fit for porters, and by doing so you degrade yourself, and take bread from other men. Should you ever be sent on such an errand, you are entitled to take a fly at the governor's expense.

VII. Never row further than the nearest jetty. Should the governor be foolish enough to want to go elsewhere, tell him that there are plenty of boats to be hired, and inform the boatmen on shore, so that they may importune him. If you are obliged to row any distance break the oars or drop the crutches into the sea. When the governor directs you to meet him anywhere at a certain hour, never start till half an hour after the time—it is better that he should wait for you than you for him; should you ever arrive before him, inform him that you have been an hour waiting.

VIII. When you find yourself in a French port, or in any other place where it is difficult to procure hands, it is a mere matter of over-delicacy on your part to obey orders. Should any complaint be made, avow your readiness to leave at once, and try to persuade the rest of the crew to

do so. This will bring the governor to his senses, especially if the men have just received their new clothes. If the vessel proceeds beyond the Channel demand double wages; it is the custom on board yachts. Inform the rest of the crew of this circumstance.

By following the above simple rules you will maintain the character of your order, and, at the same time, there will be little danger of your being unemployed, at least so long as the present system continues.

When I was leaving for Sark last summer, three men out of my crew were unable to render assistance in working the vessel. One of them asserted that he had sprained his wrist, and was unable to haul or coil; he had, however, full use of his tongue, and annoyed me with complaints about the captain, who, he said, had called him a 'growler.'

Another could nowhere be found until the last moment, when he was discovered in a public-house. As the boat rowed him alongside, I heard him averring in most emphatic and, as he supposed, musical accents, 'I love but one, and only one,' and as he had met with his aunt or sister in every port we had visited, I, at once, formed my opinion as to his state. One man was necessarily told off to keep this faithful swain in his hammock and make him comfortable, and thus our crew was practically three hands short. We had, fortunately, a lovely passage; had it been otherwise, we might have been in difficulties, for the navigation about the Channel Islands is so intricate, and the channels between the rocks are in some places so narrow, that the greatest skill and readiness are required to avoid meeting with serious disasters.

A. G. L'E.

THE TREVILIANS' SUMMER TRIP, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

ROSE and Evelyn Trevilian sat under the trees on the lawn in front of their home, on a warm evening in July, each of them absorbed in a novel. They were very pretty girls, with clear, fresh complexions, fine teeth, dark hair, and honest grey eyes. At this time they were scarcely eighteen; and being twins, and very much alike, the good looks of each were reflected and heightened in the other, as it were, so that they generally received credit for a greater share than they actually possessed. Huntley Manor, their father's place, was in one of the southern counties; the house, a long, straggling mansion, had evidently been added to at many different times, and according to as many different tastes, and the effect was, perhaps, more picturesque than correct in an architectural point of view. It was absolutely covered with all sorts of creeping plants; the old walls modestly veiling themselves under a curtain of ivy, Virginia creeper, and roses, not to speak of a variety of perennial beauties.

An extensive lawn lay in front, dotted with fine old trees and brilliant flower-beds. At the back was the garden, kept up in the old style, with broad grassy walks, and close-clipped yew and box-trees; and there might be found an abundance of those dear, old-fashioned flowers, so rarely to be met with in modern times, wall-flowers, stocks, sweet william, &c., &c., filling the air with their delicious fragrance. The river ran below a terrace at the bottom of the garden.

The girls sat quietly reading for a long time, undisturbed by any sound save that of bird and insect life; but at length a tall young man of about twenty-one appeared on the steps of the hall-door, and strolled leisurely towards them, lighting a cigar as he came: this was their eldest brother, Walter, who had taken brilliant honours at Oxford in April, and having rather injured his health by his exertions, he was at present, by the doctor's

advice, indulging in a long holiday before entering on the serious business of life. He was very tall, and extremely handsome, with the same frank, honest expression which characterised his sisters. The books were shut as he approached, and Rose jumped up to meet him.

'What a time you and papa have been over your wine,' said she; 'and pray what have you done with mamma?'

'She will be here directly; she has gone up to inspect the small fry in the nursery. But now, what do you think has been the subject of our conversation in the dining-room? You would give a good deal to know, I can tell you.'

'What was it? What was it?' cried both at once; 'anything interesting or exciting? Do tell us, Walter.'

'Come, attend to my little wants first, and give me my little comforts about me,' said he, in a would-be languid manner, 'and then we'll see what can be done for you.'

So he was pulled down into a comfortable chair, and a little rustic table drawn close for his elbow to rest on, and then his sisters knelt down on the grass at his feet, and begged for the desired information.

Some slow puffs of the cigar, and a twinkle of enjoyment at their evident curiosity, was the sole response for some minutes; but at last, after coaxing and shaking and hair-pulling had all been tried in vain, he relented, and began.

'Well, you really wish to know? You're sure you think it would be good for you to know?'

'Oh, go on, you tiresome creature!' said Evelyn. 'Yes, we wish to know, and it would be good for us to know; and what is more, we *must* know.'

'That about settles it, I suppose, so here goes. Well, my little dears, did you ever, in the whole course of your small existences, hear of a place called Spa?'

'Yes, of course,' said Evelyn; 'it is in France.'

'Oh! is it indeed? What do you say, Rose?'

'It is in Germany—in Prussia, I think,' said Rose.

'In Prussia, you think! Nice young ladies you both are! and I shall request Miss Hall to take you back into the schoolroom to pursue your geographical studies. Upon my word you don't deserve to go, for displaying such terrific ignorance. Spa is in Belgium.'

'To go!' cried both the girls, who had never left England in their lives; 'you don't mean to say there is any idea of our going there?'

'The parents and I are going, with the boys, and we thought of perhaps taking you,' said Walter, in a patronizing tone; 'but I really don't know that it will be my duty to advise it, under the circumstances.'

'To go abroad! Oh, just think of it! how delightful! But it can't be true. Here is mamma! now we shall know all about it.'

Mrs. Trevilian appeared with her work-basket at this moment; and her daughters rushing towards her, soon placed her in a comfortable chair, and assailed her with questions.

'Don't mind them, mother,' said Walter; 'when I asked them, just now, where Spa is, one said in Russia, and the other in India; so after that, of course they remain in the schoolroom, and Louisa and Constance can go instead.'

'That was truly shocking!' said Mrs. Trevilian, laughing. 'Well, girls, I suppose you are quite enchanted at the thought of a little trip?' And she proceeded to explain to them that their papa had been advised to drink the waters at Spa for a few weeks, and that it had been decided they should make up a family party and go together.

'When we leave Spa we shall go to Cologne, and let you see the Rhine, and then come home by Paris.'

By Paris! that was the crowning bliss of all, if any part of so entirely blissful a scheme could be said to be more so than another; and never was any piece of good news received with greater excitement and ecstasy.

Presently Charles, Arthur, and William, the three schoolboys, came in from a boating expedition, and were made aware of the intended trip. They were by no means so overjoyed as their sisters, for the river at home had great attractions for them; however, they were devoted to cricket also, and agreed that they would take their bats, and that it would be 'very jolly indeed.'

By-and-by it got too dark to remain any longer on the lawn; so they all adjourned to the lighted drawing-room for tea, where Mr. Trevilian was awaiting them with the two schoolroom young ladies, Louisa, a girl of sixteen, and Constance, three years younger, as well as their good old governess, Miss Hall, who had been with them ever since the twins were eight years old, and was much beloved by the whole family.

'How I envy you!' said Louisa, when she heard the news; 'but my turn will come some day, I suppose, won't it, papa?'

'That it shall, my love,' replied her father; 'but don't be impatient; you will find yourself grown up—well, *quite* grown up, I suppose I must say, and out of the schoolroom, only too soon—and then there will be foreign trips for you also.'

After tea, and a little music, and what promised at one time to be interminable questions and explanations, and consultations of Bradshaw and Murray, the happy party at last broke up. The two eldest girls, whose rooms opened into each other, lay long awake, talking of the coming pleasure, and, as a sort of perpetual chorus to their rejoicings, they remarked over and over again, 'How delightful that the Pagets are there; and how surprised they will be to see us!'

The Paget family were near neighbours at Huntley, and consisted of a father and mother, one son, a barrister, and one daughter, Ada, about a year older than the twins. They had come to that part of the world about two years before, to take possession of a small property left Mrs. Paget by a distant relation; and there was a great friend-

ship between the two families, and a particularly warm one between the young ladies.

In about three days all the necessary preparations for the journey were completed; and finally, on one of the loveliest afternoons of a very lovely season, Louisa and Constance were flying about amongst the flowerbeds, gathering bouquets for the departing travellers. Walter, with the three boys and most of the baggage, had already departed by an early train, as they wished to 'lionize' Dover; and, after innumerable adieus and promises of letters, the others now got under weigh. The girls had so very rarely left home before, that even at this sublime moment, tears almost came into their eyes as they looked back from the carriage windows at their sisters and Miss Hall, gazing wistfully after them at the hall-door, whilst the afternoon sun lighted up all the trees and flowers, in such a way that they thought the dear old place had never looked half so beautiful.

Dover was reached without any adventure, and Walter had secured rooms for the party in the Ship Hotel. He took his sisters out in the evening for a stroll on the beach, where the animation and novelty of the scene greatly delighted them. In the course of the walk, a hand was laid suddenly on Walter's shoulder, and a cheery voice called out,

'Why, Trevilian! can it be you?'

'Holloa, Granville!' was the reply, 'can it be you,—I may rather say; I heard you were off to Switzerland, and thought you were perched on some pinnacle of the Alps long ago.'

'Well, so I was; but you see, at Zermatt I met a very nice pleasant fellow, who had been doing all sorts of things; and we were to have done all sorts of other things together; however, he was suddenly summoned home; and, being a nice fellow, I thought I might as well have his company as long as possible, and so I came with him: but I am just starting again for the Tyrol, with an old Oxford don who is wild about the dolomite moun-

tains; a queer old fellow, but a good soul—Crossthwaite is his name.'

'Well, *you* are a queer fellow, I am sure,' said Walter, laughing. 'The idea of your flying about the world in such a way! But come on now, and let us overtake my sisters, and I will introduce you. You know Granville well by name, I am sure,' said he to them, as he presented his friend.

'Yes,' replied Rose, turning to Mr. Granville; 'your name is very familiar to us; it is surprising we have not met before.'

'I was always so unlucky as not to be able to go to Huntley when Trevilian asked me,' he answered; 'but I hope I may be more fortunate in future.'

'Come in and have tea with us,' said Walter, 'and be introduced to the heads of the house.'

So Mr. Granville accompanied them to the hotel, and was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Trevilian. On hearing that they were going to Spa, he tried hard to persuade them to change their plans, and proceed to Innsbruck instead; but this being pronounced impossible, and as he found the evening pass in a particularly pleasant manner, the volatile young man began to meditate an assault on Mr. Crossthwaite, to make him alter his plans, which, as Walter laughingly observed, 'was not likely; not if Mr. Crossthwaite knew it.'

However, to their great astonishment, when they all met on board the steamer next morning, it was announced that Mr. Crossthwaite had proved less obdurate than was expected, inasmuch as he had consented to a compromise, and would spend a week at Spa in the first place. Mrs. Trevilian and the girls felt rather shocked at young Granville's inconsiderateness in thus upsetting his friend's arrangements to gratify a whim of his own. However, nothing could be said, and Mr. Crossthwaite was duly introduced.

He was a man of five-and-forty, about the middle height, and very thin. His face was not handsome, by any means; but both talent and goodness were expressed in it. He

was beginning to be slightly bald about the forehead, and looked and felt decidedly shy and nervous at coming into the midst of so large a party, especially the lady portion thereof. But Mrs. Trevilian immediately took him in hand, with her usual kindness; and long before they reached Calais, her pleasant cordial manners had made him feel quite at home with her, at all events.

The passage was very calm, and none of them suffered from *mal de mer* except Barnes, the maid; and as she had, previous to starting, declared herself quite unassailable by any weakness of the sort, she had to submit to a considerable amount of 'chaff' from the boys during the rest of the excursion.

After a long and wearisome journey (at least so it appeared to the elders of the party, at any rate, the spirit of the younger members seeming to rise higher every hour) they reached Brussels, where as many as could found accommodation in the Hôtel de Flandre; but some of the gentlemen had to go elsewhere. The next day Walter and his friend and Mr. Crossthwaite went on to Spa to secure quarters, whilst the others remained for two days in order to see Brussels thoroughly. They went to Waterloo, of course, and visited cathedral, church, and museum, and began to lay in a stock of photographs. The shops looked very inviting, but as Paris was to be visited on the way home, any acquaintance with them, further than was to be gained from the outside of the windows, was strictly prohibited. On the third day they made their way to Spa, where Walter and the Pagets met them at the station and took them to the capital airy lodgings which they had been fortunate enough to secure, Walter and the two gentlemen establishing themselves comfortably at the Hôtel d'Orange. The Pagets had prepared tea for them in their rooms, and insisted on their all going there; and a most joyous meeting they had, Mr. Crossthwaite alone being too shy to join them. Edward Paget, who was by some people suspected of a secret weakness for Rose Trevilian, was

full of plans for riding-parties, picnics, and all sorts of 'jollity,' as he expressed it, whilst Mr. Granville became more and more strongly of opinion that the Tyrol was a decided bore, and that his companion must by all means be persuaded, if possible, to give it up and remain at Spa.

Next morning a great array of the little sure-footed Ardennes horses stood pawing outside the door of the Trevilians' lodgings. Mrs. Paget, who was very fond of riding, acted chaperone, and they had a famous canter over the moors, and at last alighted on a tempting spot, where some sat and others strolled as they felt inclined, enjoying the delicious air. Evelyn, observing that Mr. Crossthwaite kept apart and looked shy and uncomfortable, evidently feeling 'a fish out of water' in the midst of the large merry party, contrived, good-naturedly, to get near him, and began to talk to him, though terribly afraid to do so, on account of the fearful amount of learning of which she had heard so much. But she was agreeably surprised by finding that he not only condescended to converse with her, but that he used language perfectly intelligible to her, and talked in a most interesting way on interesting subjects. Evelyn was not only well educated, but was an extremely intelligent, well-informed girl, who had read a great deal, and remembered what she read. Mr. Crossthwaite was, therefore, equally surprised and pleased with her, for (owing, no doubt, to the limited number of his female acquaintance) he was accustomed to look on all ladies and their acquirements with a certain amount of contempt, a sentiment which it is to be hoped, for the credit of his sex, is shared by very few of them.

'I felt very sorry for you, Miss Evelyn,' said Mr. Granville, on the way home, 'when I saw you in the claws of the old fellow. Were you quite knocked down with words about a mile long?'

'Very much the contrary,' replied she: 'he really is a very pleasant man when he does talk. What a pity it is that he should be so silent generally.'

'Oh, poor fellow! he's a regular

bookworm, you know, and they never talk much: he is a sort of owl, who ought never to be seen except at night, and then only in connection with green spectacles and a shaded lamp and musty volumes of an appalling size.'

'Well,' said Evelyn, laughing, 'you see it is possible to behold him without such appendages. But what will he do without his books for two long months?'

'He will collect materials for one, that is what he will do. You know he's a great geologist, and I am sure the very sight of the dolomites will make him mad, and I'm very courageous to go with him,' I consider. Not that he would have pluck enough to go dangerously mad, but he will fall into a mooning state, and take root on the Monte Cristallo, and refuse to leave it, to the despair of myself and his old mother, when she hears it.'

'Is his mother living still?' said Evelyn.

'Yes. I don't wonder at your asking, for he looks too old to possess such a relative; but, after all, he is only forty-five, you know, though he looks so much more. The fuss that he makes about her is something quite incredible, I assure you. She lives in a little cottage near Oxford, and of course he is there continually; and I really think he is animated—actually animated, when with her. It is too ridiculous the way he goes on about her.'

'How can you say so?' cried Evelyn; 'he can't be too attentive to his mother, surely.'

'Well, you see, I don't understand that sort of thing. Of course, I'm immensely fond of my mother; but I should never dream of putting myself to such worry and trouble on her account; and I am sure she would not expect it.'

Mr. Crossthwaite here rode up to Evelyn's other side, with a curious plant he had discovered; and they again got into conversation. She managed by degrees to bring his mother on the *tapis*, and watched with interest how his eyes brightened as he spoke of her. She could not help thinking that, in spite of Master Frank's external advantages,

his youth and good-looks and easy manners and careless good-temper, he was, in reality, a much inferior man to the plain, awkward, depressed individual beside her; the very fact of his being there, instead of amongst his beloved mountains, merely to gratify a whim of his companion's, showed an amount of self-denial of which the other was incapable. A few evenings after this they went to the Redoute, and visited the roulette and rouge et noir tables, and watched the bourgeois of the place enjoying their nightly dance in the *grande salle*. In the rooms they found many acquaintances, some just arrived, some just going, and they had a most lively evening. Rose and the Pagets seemed instinctively to fraternize; Granville had installed himself as Evelyn's especial friend from the first, and they got on famously together.

'Come, Trevilian,' said he to Walter, this evening, 'come and let us venture a few francs at roulette; you will come and look on, won't you?' he added, turning to Evelyn, 'and bring us good luck.'

'But isn't it very wicked?' said Evelyn, hesitating.

Both Walter and Granville laughed heartily.

'Not very,' said the latter. 'I can show you a most respectable old female who has been playing all night, and I'm sure she wouldn't do anything "wicked."'

So they went into the next room, and, after looking on for a little, the two young gentlemen put each down a five-franc piece, and won. This happened several times, and Evelyn grew excited. It happened that she had, fortunately, been saving her pocket-money for some time before she had heard of the foreign trip, so she was the happy possessor of twenty pounds, which was to be spent in Paris on all manner of beautiful presents for sisters and friends at home; and this idea was one of the chief pleasures she was looking forward to. It now occurred to her how delightful it would be if this twenty pounds would turn itself into forty pounds, in such a very easy manner

as Walter had doubled his francs; and, after various debatings within herself, she could resist no longer.

'Will you put this down for me, please?' said she to Walter.

'That is right!' cried Granville. 'I am sure you will make a fortune in no time.'

Evelyn entered into all the excitement of the hour. At one time she had nearly doubled her money; when reverses began to set in. She would not give up, however, always confidently expecting to win everything back—till, after various vicissitudes of fortune, she saw her last coin swept away by the rake of the croupier. She tried to laugh and look indifferent; and Walter and Granville commended her pluck, and declared they would win all her money back for her; but her eyes filled with tears as she turned to find a seat, and, to her surprise and mortification, she saw that Mr. Cross-thwaite was standing close beside her.

'Here is a seat,' said he, bringing her to a sofa in a corner of the room. 'I am afraid you have been unlucky.'

Evelyn's eyes brimmed over: she was little more than a child as yet, and she could not find voice to reply. Her companion saw this, and, with wonderful tact for so learned a man, he immediately began to talk of indifferent topics not requiring an answer, until she regained her composure. When, however, she was fairly recovered, he brought the subject round again to the gaming-table, and she told him all her distress, which she never dreamt she would have been able to do, and tears sprung once more unbidden to her eyes.

'I feel truly sorry for your loss and disappointment,' said her friend. 'I know that it must be a great disappointment; but, you see, it does not do to play with fire and expect to come off without a burn. If I might venture to advise you, I should say, never put down so much as a franc again. The love of excitement is so subtle a thing: it takes possession of us in a way we could not believe beforehand. Were there no other evils connected with

it, there is something degrading—is there not?—in getting so excited about the acquisition of mere money.'

He grew very confidential in the course of the evening, and told Evelyn, to her great surprise, that his own love of gambling had been so strong in his youth that every consideration of duty and principle gave way to it, and no advice or remonstrance had the slightest effect on him until he fairly broke his father's heart, of whose sudden death he received intelligence one evening at Baden. 'I never thought I should tell that story to any one,' he concluded. 'You may imagine the anguish and remorse which made me old before my time, and which render me to this very day, I am quite aware, unlike other people. The very sight of a gambling-table fills me with horror, and I long to stop the hand of any young man or woman whom I see beginning to tamper with a temptation so fatal to me.'

Evelyn warmly thanked him for his advice, and assured him that nothing should ever induce her to do again as she had that evening done.

'I am very glad to hear you say so,' he answered; 'and not only that, but use all your influence with your brothers and friends, or any one in whom you are interested, to prevent them from running any risk from that terrible evil. Will you forgive my lecture?' he added, smiling and holding out his hand to say 'good-night,' as Walter and Granville came towards them. They, too, had been unlucky, and a shade was on the brow of the latter.

'That old fellow seems to be always dodging about and making a victim of you,' said he, impatiently, looking after Mr. Cross-thwaite as he left the room. 'I wish he would keep himself to himself, or you will vote me a dreadful bore for inflicting him upon you.'

'Oh! no, no,' cried Evelyn, 'I like him very much; he is very kind and good, and does not bore me at all.'

'Ah, that's all your good nature, any one *must* be bored with him.'

Hallo! here is all the world going away; let me get your shawl. Where is it?

'Don't take the trouble,' said Evelyn, drily, for his tone jarred upon her. 'Walter, you will find it behind the second pillar on the right in the dancing-room.'

Granville turned on his heel in a pet, and went away by himself. His ill-humour was never of long duration, however, and next morning he had forgotten all about it, and came early to the Trevilians, full of plans for the day's amusement.

What with rides, and drives, and pic-nics, the time passed swiftly away, until at last one evening, on the return of the whole party from a long walk, Rose put her arms round Evelyn's neck when they got up to their own room, and hiding her face, said,

'Do you know, Edward Paget is talking to papa down stairs just now; what do you think it is about?'

'Aha!' cried Evelyn, laughing, 'so it has come about as I guessed. I am so glad. I like Mr. Paget very much; but oh! Rose, what shall I do without you?'

'Do without me!' said Rose, holding up her head. 'Why, you will have some one far better than me, for of course you and Mr. Granville will arrange it for the same day.'

Evelyn started violently.

'Mr. Granville and me! Oh! Rose, I never thought of such a thing, nor does he, I am quite sure. I don't like him the least in that way. We are like brother and sister, nothing more. Oh! I should never dream of marrying Mr. Granville.'

'Should you not?' said Rose, disappointed; 'I am sorry for that, he is so nice and so handsome; but never mind, some one else is sure to turn up before that, and we shall leave home together, and live near each other all our lives.'

Evelyn warmly embraced her sister, and tried to look as if she accepted her consolations, in order not to damp this new-born happiness. But she lay long awake that night, and shed some natural tears at the idea of the separation, and meditated on many things. She almost smiled

as she thought of Rose's suggestion as to Granville; she certainly looked upon him very much as she did upon Walter, and nothing more. But how was it that the face of Mr. Crossthwaite kept continually presenting itself before her mental vision, and different things he had said in the course of the many conversations they had now had together would come up in her mind? Could it be that she, a pretty, lively girl of eighteen, was about to fall in love with the plain, shy, elderly professor? No, she was *not* about to fall in love with him, for all unconsciously to herself she had already done so, and it was pretty certain that he would henceforth hold a place in her heart which no other man could ever hope to do; but as yet she did not know this.

So things went on as usual (except that Rose and Edward Paget were in a seventh heaven of bliss and contentment, and the parents on each side were greatly pleased with the engagement), till one morning that Mr. Crossthwaite took a long solitary walk by himself over the moors, making up his mind to some painful step evidently, judging by the expression of his face. That resolution was to tear himself away at once from the society of Evelyn.

Thinking over everything, he marvelled at his own folly in allowing himself to remain near her when he became aware of the danger of doing so—and came to a final decision amid many bitter thoughts of the contrast between them, and of his uncheered solitary life. But he looked as calm and composed as usual that night on entering the ball-room at the Redoute. It was Friday, on which evening there is what is called a dress ball, in which the visitors take part, and the Trevilians and Pagets were already there.

'This next dance is a stupid quadrille,' said Granville, coming up to Evelyn, 'and I am going to dance it with Miss Paget; but remember, you have promised me the next waltz. Oh! by Jove, there is that fellow Crossthwaite mooning into the room, and he will select you for his victim of course, as usual. Can't

I take you somewhere to escape him? Come into the next room.'

'No, thank you,' replied Evelyn, 'I have often told you that I find him very pleasant to talk to—I don't feel a victim in the least.'

'I can't understand that, and I don't believe you really think him agreeable. However, here he comes, and I'll be off if you are sure you won't be rescued. Au revoir! don't forget our waltz.'

'Are you going to dance?' said Mr. Crossthwaite, coming up and seating himself beside her.

'No,' said Evelyn, 'I have just been dancing, and I am going to rest.'

'Then we can have a little talk,' said he, with a smile; 'the last, I am afraid, for it is high time I was off to the Tyrol.'

A pang shot through Evelyn's heart as he said this, which revealed to her a great deal more of her own state of mind than she had previously known.

'Do you mean to go directly?' she said.

'To-morrow,' replied he; and at the word her heart died within, and she could not have found voice to make a remark, so it was fortunate he continued talking.

'To-morrow I mean to go. Just think what an idler I am. It is a whole month to-day since we came here, and it is almost too late now for the Tyrol.'

'If it is too late, then, you had better stay on here,' said Evelyn, with an attempt at a laugh.

'No, I think I shall go: Granville will not, of course. I should never expect him to leave all his amusements here.'

'What would you not expect Granville to do?' said the gentleman in question, as he passed where they sat.

'To leave Spa to-morrow,' replied his friend, smiling.

'To-morrow! surely not to-morrow?'

Granville felt he had behaved ill in detaining Mr. Crossthwaite so long, and that he could not in common civility let him go on by himself, so he stopped, and begged him to remain another week.

'You will persuade him, Miss

Evelyn, I know,' said he, as he was obliged to go away to dance. 'I shall leave him in your hands.'

Evelyn, thus commissioned, did her best, but Mr. Crossthwaite was perfectly firm and immovable in his determination.

'How obstinate you are,' said she at length, rather piqued, 'and how unpleasant we must all have been to you to make you so determined to leave.'

He looked at her, and there was a strange expression in his eyes which made her colour and turn hers away.

'Miss Evelyn,' he said, gravely, 'I have been happy here, happier than I ever thought I should be, far happier than I had any right to be. I shall always look back at this time as the brightest part of my life; but it is time that all were ended. Dreams are pleasant things, but you know one must not always indulge in them, especially when they are utterly wild and useless. Good-bye now, you have been very kind to me; I shall never forget it—good-bye.'

He took her hand and held it firmly pressed for a moment in his own, and the next minute had abruptly left the room. Evelyn's thoughts were in a whirl that night when she got to her own room. A great joy thrilled her whole frame when she thought of Mr. Crossthwaite's looks and words, for were they not unmistakable? Did he not love her as she loved him? Yes, the conviction grew upon her more and more strongly. But about his going away to-morrow. Surely he would not go—he could not go—if he really cared for her. She felt that without him everything would be a blank, and if he loved her he must feel the same. At last she settled it in her own mind that he would not go, it was impossible: at any rate, she would see him in the morning, for his good-bye only meant good-night, of course; and then he would be sure to change his mind. And having come to this conclusion, she fell asleep, but not till the dawn of a glorious summer morning had begun to redden the eastern sky.

At breakfast time that day Walter and Granville came over from the hotel.

'Just think of it,' said the latter, 'the old fellow has gone off to the Tyrol by himself, early this morning.'

We must now skip over the rest of the visit to Spa and the trip to Cologne and the Rhine. About the end of September the Trevilians and Pagets had reached the Grand Hôtel in Paris, *en route* for home. The second day after their arrival, Mr. Granville went off by himself, somewhat suddenly, to England.

'I can tell you why he has gone, mamma,' whispered Rose to her mother, in a corner of the large public drawing-room where they were all sitting, and where much speculation had taken place on the subject. 'Evelyn refused him last night! Yes, it is quite true. I was sure something had happened, so I asked her, and she could not deny it.'

'Refused him, my dear!' said Mrs. Trevilian, all astonishment, for she had come to like Frank Granville, and to look upon him as almost as certain to be her son-in-law as young Paget. 'Are you *quite* sure?'

Rose *was* quite sure, and though a good deal surprised and disappointed, of course Mrs. Trevilian could say nothing whatever to her daughter about it—on such subjects she must judge for herself.

Poor Evelyn had a very different visit to Paris from what she had expected. Her lively companion was gone, and Rose, of course, much taken up and engrossed by her intended, and, besides that, she had her own secret, not guessed at by any one, and filling her with anxiety, joy, and doubt by turns. The day before they left, as she and her mother were walking in the Palais Royal, where the former had been making many purchases for the home party, she saw a familiar form in front of them, which made her heart leap, and Mrs. Trevilian immediately exclaimed: 'Dear me, there is Mr. Crossthwaite; we must stop him, and ask all about his adventures.' He was walking very quickly, however, and they did not

overtake him then; but he turned into the Grand Hôtel, and stood on the steps talking to some one till they came up, when Mrs. Trevilian spoke to him. He started violently at the sound of her voice, and coloured when he turned round and saw who was there.

'I thought you were at home by this time,' said he, confusedly, as if he hardly knew what he was saying.

'Come upstairs to our sitting-room,' said Mrs. Trevilian, 'and let us hear what you have been about.'

She led the way upstairs before he could make some excuse, which he seemed on the point of doing. He walked behind with Evelyn, determined not to speak to her; but catching sight of her face at a turning of the stair, and seeing how pale she was, he forgot his resolution.

'You have not been ill?' said he, in a low tone of such earnest anxiety that the delightful conviction that she was far from an object of indifference to him again impressed itself strongly upon her.

'Not at all, thank you,' she replied, in a voice which sounded cold and stiff from the effort she was making to conceal all emotion. 'We have been doing a good deal here, and I am rather tired, that is all.'

Nothing further passed between them; upstairs Mr. Trevilian, who had learned to like him extremely during the month at Spa, gave him a most cordial greeting, and pressed him to come and pay them a visit at Huntley, which, to Evelyn's mortification, he excused himself from doing, with many thanks, but with immovable firmness, saying that he was an old hermit, who never visited the haunts of men except during his summer holiday just over.

'Well, well,' said Mr. Trevilian at last, 'a wilful man must have his way. When do you cross the Channel?'

'To-morrow,' replied Mr. Crossthwaite, rising to take leave.

'Ah! then we shall at least perform the voyage together.' But they did not see him again till they were seated in the railway carriage, when he merely came up to bid

them good-bye, saying he was unavoidably detained till next day.

'Poor man! how terribly shy he is,' said Mrs. Trevilian; 'I hoped he had got over all that with us, but he seems as bad as ever again. I am sure it is mere shyness which keeps him from going with us now.'

'Oh! it is nothing else in the world,' said Mr. Trevilian; 'it is a thousand pities, for he is a very good fellow, and I have the greatest respect for him. I wish I could have got him to come to Huntley.'

Evelyn did not know how to account for this obstinate avoidance of her society, and once away from him, she harassed herself with inward questionings and doubtings. Surely he could not care for her, or how could he stay away from her—she must have made a foolish mistake—as if a learned man like him *could* really care for a girl like her! So Evelyn began to be very unhappy, and a great change in her appearance and spirits became evident to all the home circle. Her anxious mother began to think that she repented her refusal of Mr. Granville, and heartily wished that by some happy chance that youth would make his appearance again.

The winter went by much as usual. The weather was clear and bright and frosty—favourable for long walks. There was also a capital billiard-table, and a great box of books came from Mudie's every fortnight, so that there was no want of resources. In January Mr. Trevilian happened to pay a visit by himself at Sir William Graham's, a country neighbour of theirs. He arrived late, and, to his surprise, the first person he saw on taking his seat at dinner was Mr. Crossthwaite opposite him. Next day they had a long walk together, and Mr. Trevilian reproached him for having refused all invitations to Huntley, whilst it appeared he could visit other friends.

'I know it must appear extremely uncivil and unaccountable to you,' he replied, 'and I am sorry to say I can only excuse myself by letting you see what an intense fool I have been.'

He then confided his secret to Mr. Trevilian, who was utterly

amazed, and much inclined to smile at the absurd idea; but, of course, repressed it, and told his friend how very grieved he was for him, but that he was sure his daughter had never given a thought to the subject.

'I know she has not,' was the reply. 'Do not think that I have been so insane as to have any hope; but you will understand how it is I cannot visit you.'

On his return home, Mr. Trevilian, of course, told his wife what had passed, and she was no less astonished than himself. 'Poor dear man!' said she; 'how could such a thing ever come into his head? I wish I might tell Evelyn, it would amuse her greatly; but of course it would not be fair.'

As spring advanced, young Paget began to be very impatient at being 'kept so long out of his wife,' and wrote pathetic accounts of his extreme misery and loneliness in London, which Rose, at any rate, fully believed to be in no ways exaggerated. However, Mr. Trevilian would not hear of the marriage taking place till the end of August, when Rose would be nineteen; and in the meantime it was fixed that the two girls should be introduced and go about a little in London together, which would be pleasant for both. A house was accordingly taken in Eaton Square, and the young ladies duly made their *début*. Rose's engagement was announced, but Evelyn met with many admirers, the more, perhaps, that she cared nothing at all about them. Mr. Granville also was in town, and established himself on something like his old footing. Early in July a great season of shopping set in, which both Rose and her mother seemed rather to enjoy than otherwise. Evelyn was too sad, both on account of her secret and also at the prospect of losing her sister, to take much interest in anything; and when young Granville proposed once more, and was decidedly refused, her mother was completely puzzled, and began to think that some terrible illness must be on the point of showing itself. The evening before they went down to Huntley, it being now within four

weeks of the wedding, Evelyn and her mother were sitting alone in the drawing-room, as the others had all gone to the Opera. A letter was brought in for Mrs. Trevilian from their neighbour, Lady Graham, who was at home. It said—

‘We are in great distress here: our dear friend, Mr. Crossthwaite, is in the house dangerously ill; the doctors give us very little hope of him this evening.’ Mrs. Trevilian read this paragraph aloud.

‘How very sad,’ she said; ‘poor Mr. Crossthwaite! Evelyn, my dear child, what is the matter?’

Evelyn had started off her seat and stood staring at her mother, pale as death.

‘Read it again,’ she said—‘Not dangerously ill—Oh! surely not that—I cannot bear it.’

Her mother rose and went to her.

‘Evelyn, what is this? you astonish me—you cannot mean that you—that you—care for Mr. Crossthwaite, except as a friend?’

‘I could die for him!’ she said, vehemently.

‘My dear child!’ was all Mrs. Trevilian could say—she was so completely taken aback by this unexpected announcement.

‘Had you any idea of this, Rose?’ she asked of her other daughter, whom she took into her own room that night for a private conference.

‘Well, I must confess I had begun to suspect something of the kind, mamma,’ she replied, ‘though I never dreamt of its being so serious; but what will you do? Surely you won’t forbid it, since Evelyn is set on it. What will papa say?’

‘Your father will be amazed, and I am sure he will disapprove—not that there is any objection to the man, except that he is too old, far too old, and then he is not at all suited to Evelyn—he is a regular old bachelor.’

‘Oh! I think you are mistaken, mamma; Evelyn and he got on capitally; then you know he is not nearly so old as he looks. My only

objection to him is, that he wears such fearfully baggy coats.’

This made them both smile.

‘As to that,’ said Mrs. Trevilian, ‘I suppose we could find him a good tailor; but, poor man, I forget how useless all our anxieties are likely to be; he is so very ill, and not expected to recover.’ However, Mr. Crossthwaite did recover, contrary to all expectation.

Mr. Trevilian was quite as much surprised (and almost annoyed) as his wife expected. At first he refused to believe that it was anything but a mere fancy, and a very mistaken one, on Evelyn’s part, but in the course of a week or two he modified his views and went over to see Mr. Crossthwaite. One day shortly afterwards that gentleman drove up in Sir William Graham’s carriage, and after luncheon Evelyn and he walked in the garden together. Once more she saw those serious eyes turned on her with a look which was reserved for her of all the world, and which filled her with indescribable happiness.

‘Evelyn,’ said he, ‘I must hear it from your own lips—I cannot realize it, or believe it as yet—is it possible that you can love me?’ Evelyn’s answer must have been very satisfactory, for Rose’s wedding was immediately postponed, and on the last day of September the twins were married at the same time. Mr. and Mrs. Paget went to Italy, and Mr. and Mrs. Crossthwaite to Scotland; but there was a happy Christmas meeting at Huntley. The more they saw of Mr. Crossthwaite, the more did Mr. and Mrs. Trevilian repent of their first opposition to the marriage, and the more did their love and respect increase for their, at first, unwelcome son-in-law. In two years from that time Mr. Granville married Louisa Trevilian; and now Constance is the only daughter at home. That she may long remain there is the hearty wish of her parents; but one which we fear is not at all likely to be realized.

L. L.

moration with him; to come down, in point of fact, ten days before the Commemoration began, and to stay till it was over. The brother has got two very pretty sitting-rooms, overlooking the old quadrangle of Boniface, and he obtained the tutor's leave that one of them should be appropriated to myself. The tutor was ready to oblige an old pupil who kept his name on the books; but, with a vindictive recollection of my having screwed him up on a certain occasion, he gave utterance to some disparaging remarks on my bygone university career.

So I suddenly dropped from the clouds: and this is literally true, for I had a top story in the Temple, and found myself with brother Tom and his set. Previous to leaving town on this lengthened visit, I fastened a card on my door, which had often done duty before, bearing on it the unhistoric statement that I should be back in a quarter of an hour. The legal visitors who resorted to me were chiefly of an unpleasant kind, and I hoped that if they waited till the end of that indefinite fifteen minutes, they might endure a state of penal exasperation. I very much enjoyed finding myself with Tom and Blades and Gushington, and the rest of that lot. Tom had just gone in for Mods. (the little beast got a first), and Gushington, brother to the Honourable Impulsia, had just been ploughed. Blades had taken a brace of Firsts; but as his principles were not at all well established, and his conduct coincided with his principles, I took it upon me to inform Mr. Blades that the sharpest blades must cut their stick; to which he responded, that it was necessary that the authorities should first get a *handle*. Blades had given a famous answer to a noxious little examiner who had rather got his berth by a fluke, who had himself taken a weak degree, and acted weakly ever since. The little examiner had asked Blades some question which he had got out of Donaldson's 'Varronianus,' and put it in such a shady way, that he showed that he had failed to master Donaldson's idea. Blades transfixed the unhappy man with a stern ex-

pression of countenance, and mildly observed, 'I beg your pardon, sir, but I rather think that what you wished to ask me was something in this way;' and then propounded the question in its correct form. Didn't poor little Gush only wish he could do things in that style! But Gush, as I said, was ploughed, although we vehemently incited him to glory by the example of Adolphus Smalls, who triumphantly took his degree at Boniface a few years ago. This is a famous lyric, after Macaulay, well known at Boniface and other colleges; and as it has not travelled much beyond, I had better confer on it a little 'temporary immortality.'

• Adolphus Smalls of Boniface

By the nine gods he swore
That as he had been ploughed three times
He would be ploughed no more.
By the nine gods he swore it,
And put on coaches three;
And many a livelong night he read
With sported oak and towelled head
To get him his degree.

• Now every hall and college

Has seen the awful list
Of candidates to pass their Greats,
Which Smalls so oft has missed.
Shame on the undergraduate
Who trembles for a plough,
When even Smalls of Boniface
Expects that he'll get through.

• Now towards the schools the gownsmen

Are pacing one and all,
From many a classic college,
From many a humble hall,
From many a lonely lodging,
Which, hid in a distant street,
From dons and duns to Oxford sons
Affords a safe retreat;

• From legendary Christ Church,

Where booms the far-famed bell
Reared by the hand of Wolsey,
But when I cannot tell:
From classic quads of Balliol
Where third-floor men decry
The smoky roofs of Worcester
Fringing the western sky;

• From the proud halls of Brasenose,

Queen of the Isis wave,
Who trains her crew on beef and bear
Competitors to brave;
From Pembroke, where the classmen
Are few and far between;
From New Inn Hall, where such a thing
Has never yet been seen.

• And thickly and more thickly

Towards the five order gates
In cap and gown, flash through the town
White-chokered candidates.

Slasher of Christ Church ne'er before
 In academics seen ;
 And Nobby of the collars high,
 Girt with the scarf none else may tie ;
 Loud trouser'd Bloomer, stripes and all,
 And whisker'd Tomkins from the hall
 Of seedy Magdalene.

' There be four select examiners
 The classes to decide,
 And three by turn and turn about
 Are sitting side by side.
 Morning and eve the trio
 Have turned the papers o'er,
 Where gownsmen write in black and white
 Such questions as they floor.

' Then Mr. Smalls of Boniface
 Stood up his fate to meet ;
 Well known was he to all the three,
 And they bade him take a seat.
 Men say that he strange answers made
 In his divinity,
 And that strange words were in his prose,
 Canine to a degree.

' But they called his *vivâ voce* fair,
 And they said his books would do,
 And native cheek, where facts were weak,
 Got Smalls in triumph through.
 So they gave him the testamur
 That was a passman's right,
 He was more than three examiners
 Could plough from morn to night.

' And in each Oxford college,
 In the dreary April days,
 When undergraduates fresh from hall
 Are gathering round the blaze ;
 When crusted port is opened,
 And the moderator lit ;
 When the weed grows red in the freshman's
 mouth,
 And makes him turn to spit.

' When goes unlimited are forced
 On some unhappy gull,
 When victims doomed to mull their pass
 Unconscious pass the mull ;
 With chaffing and with laughing
 They still the tale renew,
 How Smales of Boniface went in,
 And actually got through.'

The only fault that I know of in this parody is that it is too good, too close to the 'Lay of Horatius.' It was rather curious finding myself among all these fellows going in for their several examinations, and having myself no share or interest in the matter. It was a case of the *suave mari magno*, watching a storm from a rock, smoking a quiet cigar among a lot of unquiet people. It was rather curious, too, finding myself in Oxford after the lapse of a few years, and to observe the rapidity of

those changes which are always going on amid its ancient institutions. Curious also it was to meet little Figg, the jeweller, in the High, and to reflect that probably his legal representative in London might be hammering away at my oak up that five-flight in the Temple. I have always been suffering from what has been well called the prevalent Oxford disease, *tic-doloreux*. That kind of tic is very dolorous indeed. I had fondly hoped to have brought a blushing bride down to Oxford, when I should pay this Memorial visit to the seat of learning ; to have won her sympathetic tear as I pointed out the schools where I was ruthlessly ploughed and her look of elated pride as I should show her that reach of the river where I helped to bump the next Torpid. But she preferred Tompkins, a man of no merit, on the coarse and feeble ground that he was able to offer her an establishment. I hear that Mrs. Tompkins is coming down this Commem., and I contemplate freezing her soul with my cutting politeness. How this last *lustrum* has changed the old place ! The Union is enlarged, and the Broad is altered, and there are a lot of new buildings at Christ Church, and the chapel at Exeter is finished, and that lazy dog Hurst is Public Examiner, and a man who has been, or is going to be, Proctor is telling me about his engagement to his pretty cousin (this surely is an irregularity, and the Vice-Chancellor ought to look into it), and little brother Tommy has got a First at Mods. I dreamt the other night that I was going in for Smalls again, and was in a fearful funk because I could not recollect the second aorists of the irregular verbs. But I shall not bother myself either with troublesome dreams or troublesome realities. Let me take a draught of this familiar Oxford ale, which wise old Warton knew and loved and testified to its blessed effects—

Balm of my cares, sweet solace of my toils,
 Hail, juice benignant !

I shall not have lived in vain, if I have accumulated wisdom for brother Tommy, and brother Tommy is cer-

tainly doing all he can to make this a jolly commemoration for himself and his friends.

An immense lot of people were coming. Impulsia Gushington, having explored the Oriental world, had determined to investigate the manners and customs of the Oxonians at home. On the never-to-be-forgotten day of the Commemoration she saw reason to declare that the customs were highly curious, but as for manners they had not got any. Country cousins were writing up from the most extreme parts of the kingdom, signifying their intention to attend, and their supreme pleasure that lodgings should forthwith be taken for them. All this was much easier said than done. You might take your lodgings six weeks beforehand, and even then terms were exorbitant; and when you came to the time itself, things were at famine prices. It was quite a study of human character to view the unblushing imperturbability with which astounding demands were made. The economical laws of supply and demand were exhibited with inflexible rigidity; and I repeatedly congratulated myself at the jovial quarters which brother Tommy gave me. It is satisfactory, however, to know that the most gigantic attempt at imposition proved to be either a comparative or a superlative failure. A certain tradesman in the High, of a keen speculating genius, hired the Corn Exchange and the Town Hall for Commemoration week, and had so little sense of fairness and kindly feeling, that he demanded what were almost prohibitorial prices. The Freemasons determined not to put up with the imposition, and erected a temporary hall of their own, in which they gave a splendid entertainment, which I hope, among other good results, had a salutary moral effect on the mind of the speculator.

I do believe that it is the young ladies, more than anything, which keeps up in all its splendid vitality the institution of the Commemoration. Of course the little loves want to look at the places about which they have heard so much from their sweethearts and brothers. It would be interesting to have some well-

considered attempts to ascertain the love statistics of the Commemoration week. I can only say that the passion Amor, which some learned nosologists consider a disease, and classify in the *ordo febris*, ran an extensive course, lightly, and sometimes sincerely, although the severity of the symptoms was happily mitigated by the equally extensive prevalence of cool tankards. O, 'bowery loveliness' of walks of Magdalen! O winding shores and cool whispering wave of Isis and Cherwell! O shade of Fair Rosamond, hovering at Godstowe o'er still fairer roses of to-day's world! O groves of Nuneham and Bagley! ye have much to answer for. 'In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love;' but I don't think a young man is very particular as to dates, and all seasons come pretty much the same. If there is a special season, it is the early summer, when the Commemoration comes off at Oxford. The poet of the Oxford 'Harlequin,' a promising young contemporary, has seen the full measure of Oxford's extreme peril, and has thus raised a warning voice against it:

'Awake from your reverend slumbers,
Staid city of learning, arise!
Already around thee in numbers
Besiegers prepare a surprise!
Shake off your most classic of snoozes,
One glance at your dangers to take;
The Graces have ousted the Muses—
Awake, Alma Mater, awake!

'Commem. is approaching, be waking!
Poor old dame! her false sons have betrayed her,
And already in hundreds are making
A truce with the lovely invader.
An army of beautiful Vandals
'Neath her reverend towers appear—
Hats for helmets, balmorals for sandals,
The silk parasol for the spear.

'They are coming with whispers and rustlings
And blushes and murmurs and sighs,
And dazlings of silks and book-muslin
And glances of ankles and eyes.
Kates, Emilys, Constances, Lauras,
Janas, Alices, Annes, Isabels,
Marias, Fannys, Elizabeths, Floras,
Maggies, Carolines, Charlottes, and Belles;

'Young, elderly, stately, and *mignon*,
Petite and tall, blonde and brunette,
Bands, ringlets, *l'Impératrice*, *chignon*,
Flirt and blue-stockings, prude and coquette.

The girls who've a neat foot and show it,
 The girls who will wait and won't,
 The girls who are pretty and know it,
 The girls who are pretty and don't.

• Old walls, you will ring with sweet laughter;
 Gray stones, you will echo light feet,
 And every black worm-eaten rafter
 Will have its love-tale to repeat.
Dieu garde! 'tis an awful invasion!
 May the powers to whom bachelors pray
 Keep us heart-whole from now to vacation,
 And send us in safety away!

But the warning voice was raised,
 Cassandra-like, in vain. The lovely

troops of the beautiful army came;
 they poured into the heart of the
 university; they seized the ad-
 vanced posts; they stormed the old
 quadrangles; they completed the
 work of subjugation in a moment.
 The Prussians pouring into Saxony
 and Hanover were as nothing to it.
 Hapless brother Tommy fell in the
 universal havoc; poor Tommy,
 who cannot marry, on a moderate
 calculation, for about fifteen years;
 and as for myself, a long series of
 successful competitors effaced the

recollection of the unworthy being
 who had smiled on Tompkins.

Up to the Saturday it was pre-
 sumed that academic matters would
 continue with their wonted gravity.
 But it didn't do. The business of
 collections and examinations was
 shamefully huddled up. A few men
 had impositions set them, and some
 were told to attend every day in the
 hall. Such sentences were received
 with beaming looks of cheerful satis-
 faction. The imposition was simply

a joke, illustrious for its antiquity,
 and attendance in hall simply meant
 the extensive feeding and wineing
 which was to come off there during
 the ensuing week. As Saturday
 approached, these playful, inter-
 mittent attempts at academic em-
 ployment were discontinued, and it
 became clearly understood that the
 only serious work before the uni-
 versity was to keep the Commemo-
 ration according to its own high and
 renowned standard of enjoyment.

I think I said that all examinations were over on the Saturday. The mighty Blades, however, informed his friends that it was his intention to set them an examination paper on Monday morning, directly after breakfast, if they would come and breakfast with him on that day. Miss Impulsia Gushington lisped that it was a dreadful shame. But Gush grinned and said that he and a lot of fellows would be very glad to eat Blades' breakfast and to settle down into Blades' examination paper. Impulsia wanted to know if it would be a real examination. Blades said it would; a very real and a very stiff sort of thing, knowing that Gush would hardly be inclined to act as an amateur in an examination. What was to be the reward of the man who should floor the paper, or go nearest to flooring the paper? Blades had not thought of that. Impulsia suggested a pair of gloves. Blades said he didn't so much mind, only the gloves must be boxing-gloves. So it was settled that Blades' examination was to come off on Monday morning directly after the breakfast, and that Blades was to present a pair of boxing-gloves to the candidate who should secure the highest number of marks.

Blades' breakfast was a very good one; his breakfasts always were very good. I chiefly remember it on account of the keen mental agony which Blades inflicted on his scout on this occasion. The rascal fully deserved it. He was most negligent in his services; not particularly sober, nor yet particularly honest. I remember a trick the rascal served me in my own time. A number of men happened to drop in upon me one winter evening, and

I sent him out to mull some wine. The mulled wine not making its appearance, I searched for the scout, and found him in a helpless state of intoxication at the bottom of the staircase. Perquisites were very dear to the heart of Lumsden, the scout; and the perquisites of Blades' champagne breakfast would be very well worth having. But this morning a fiend, or a brace of fiends crossed Lumsden's path, in the shape of Long Stapleton and his dog. The Long-'un had just invented a new and scientific way of knocking off the heads of bottles with a knife, with which he charmed the surrounding circle. Now Lumsden sold his bottles to the wine-merchant, and as he witnessed this lavish destruction of his own particular property, he rushed frantically into an adjacent pantry, and, producing a corkscrew, he implored the Long-'un to use it; who, in reply, flung it at his head. Stapleton's dog, Snarleyow, was a peculiarly lean animal, possessing marvellous power of assimilating food. He could consume immense quantities of provender, but with no other visible effect than that he seemed to grow leaner. During the breakfast his master flung him a dish of kidneys, a few chops, a chicken, and half a quarter of lamb, and, unless Lumsden had cleared the cloth with much precipitation, the perquisites would have been very small indeed that morning.

Then quills, blotting-paper, and foolscap were served to each man, and, in solemn silence, Blades served out a printed examination paper to each man. The presence of a huge claret cup was the only item that detracted from the solemnity and regularity of the proceedings.

GRAND COMMEMORATION EXAMINATION.

June, 1866.

Subject.—Pickwick Papers.

E. BLADES }
T. BOBUS } è Coll. Bon. Fac. Examiners.

I. Explain the subjects of Natural and Archæological Science referred to in Pickwick under the following heads:—

(1.) The Tittlebatian Theory.

- (2.) Examine the electrical studies of the scientific gentleman of Clifton, who detailed how a flash of fire danced before his eyes, and how he received a shock which stunned him for a full quarter of an hour.
- (3.) Investigate the inscription—

+
B I L S T
U M
P S H I
S. M.
A R K

And enumerate the eighteen different readings proposed.

II. Quote from any articles of the Eatanswill local press bearing on the subject of the parliamentary representation of boroughs. Compare the same with any of Mr. Lowe's speeches. You may illustrate with passages of parallel scurrility from the British weekly press.

III. Medical students, according to Mr. Pickwick, are 'very fine fellows, with judgments matured by observation and reflection, and tastes refined by reading and study.' Examine this statement with reference to the biographies of Mr. Benjamin Allen and Mr. Bob Sawyer. Explain etymologically the term 'Sawbones.'

IV. Trace the origin, rise, and progress of Mr. Winkle's attachment to Arabella Allen. Is she the same person as Barbara Allen? and give reasons for your opinion.

V. Give the substance of the monthly Report of the Committee of the Brick Lane branch of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association. You need not quote the instances, if anything less absurd occurs to you in the teetotal press of the present day.

VI. Mention the geographical position (with latitude and longitude) of Mr. Jingle's country mansion, Nohall, Nowhere.

VII. Examine the arguments of Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz, in the great case of Bardell *versus* Pickwick. Give any account of any racy trial of breach of promise case of which you have heard or been concerned in.

VIII. Do you spell the name of Sam Weller with a V or a W? and give reasons for the orthography.

IX. To whom are the following sentences to be referred?—and give the context of the passages quoted:—

a. 'Sudden disappearance—talk of the whole city—search made everywhere—without success—public fountain in the great square suddenly ceased playing—weeks elapsed—still a stoppage—workmen employed to clean it—water drawn off—father-in-law discovered sticking head first in the main-pipe, with a full confession in his right boot.'

β. 'Peek, Christian name; Weeks, surname: good, ver good. Peek Weeks. How you do, Weeks?'

γ. 'If ever you gets to up'ards o' fifty, and feels disposed to go a-marryin' anybody—no matter who—jist you shut yourself up in your own room, if you've got one, and pison yourself off-hand. Hangin's vulgar; so dont you have nothin' to say to that.'

δ. 'I said I had pledged my word as a gentleman to skin him. My character was at stake. I had no alternative. As an officer in his Majesty's service I was bound to skin him. I regretted the necessity; but it must be done. He was open to conviction. He saw that the rules of the service were imperative. He fled.'

X. Examine the doctrine of 'priory 'tachment.'

XI. *Wellerianæ voces*. State the words of the young nobleman when he was put on the pension-list because an ancestor had lit the king's pipe with a portable tinder-box;—of the cats' meat man when the housemaid

called him no gentleman;—of the soldier when he was ordered three hundred lashes;—of Blue Beard's domestic chaplain, when he buried him with a sigh of pity;—of the Polar bear when he was practising his skating;—of the young gentleman to the fractious periwinkle;—of the Lord 'Mayor, when the Chief Secretary o' State proposed his missis's health arter dinner.'

Tom got the boxing-gloves. He answered every question. At least he impinged on every question, and took the prize; a frequent trick of the little beast's. The other well-known features of the Commemoration were not so original as the examination in 'Pickwick,' but a deal pleasanter. Even every boat failed to capsize during the Procession of Boats, to the great annoyance of young ladies, who look interesting when they scream, and, I believe, to Letitia's disappointment, who would rather have liked the novelty of seeing a man drowned. There is a good deal about Letitia that reminds one of the Roman maiden putting her thumb down and relentlessly dooming the vanquished gladiator. There were pic-nics to Nuneham and Blenheim, concerts, dances, and all the authorized saturnalia of the season. As an Anglo-Latin poet observes—

'Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
Pulsanda Town Hall; nunc elegantioribus
Ornare the tables of colleges
Tempus erat spreadibus sodales.'

We had a variation of drinks which would have done credit to an American bar. There was a good deal of expensive shopping with fair cousins, who naturally wanted memorials of Oxford, not to mention some quiet Van John with their brothers in the evenings. Things have changed from the simplicity of the days of *Terræ Filius*, who says,

'Being of age to play the fool,
With muckle glee I left our school
At Hoxton.
And mounted on an easy pad,
Rode with my mother and my dad,
To Oxon.'

But the usual scene at the theatre must not be pretermitted, the theatre built by the worthy Archbishop Sheldon, who himself never set eyes upon it. It has been often described, and the unveiled reader

might fancy that the description could be stereotyped once for all. But, in reality, each Commemoration has its own *differentia*. This year had its hero. One year had Alfred Tennyson, another had Lord Derby, another Kingsley, another Mr. Disraeli. This year also had its hero—the Man in the White Coat. Arise, O Muse, and sing the Man in the White Coat. Art, also, in these unvarnished pages, has sought to depict the hour and the man. For the day came, and the mighty multitude gathered to the theatre. The area was thronged; above them were the ladies in their bright and gorgeous parterres, and in the Olympian heights were the undergraduates. And among the throng in the area came the Man in the White Coat. As when, incautious, you touch some vicious black and tan terrier, and it yells its little heart out at the insult; or as a red handkerchief dangled before an infuriated bull, maddens still more the noble beast, so did that obfusc coat stir to its inmost depths the undergraduate soul. Yes, the white-coated man in the gallery hissed vehemently and vociferously the white-coated man in the area. It is their prescriptive right. The undergraduate cap and gown may carry off any gay hues, but woe to the bad taste which exhibits a white hat or a light-coloured coat in the area. The vortex of popular fury was in this instance concentrated upon one unpopular individual. When the white coat was simply an overcoat, it was easily removeable; but in the case of the unhappy being who had no other, it seemed to be equally an offence against popular passions to keep the garment on or to take it off. The poor hunted man tried to hide himself, retreating into this and that corner of the area; but his hateful presence could not be concealed, and he was everywhere received with

hurricanes of shrieks. One compassionate undergraduate from the gallery proffered the use of a cap and gown, but of this the lonely one did not avail himself. However, a touching advertisement appeared in a local paper next week, heartily thanking the intending lender of the academical garb. At eleven the Vice-Chancellor took his seat with the proctors, who received a good deal of hissing, and it was hoped that there might be a lull in the tempest. A little good humour was produced by an absurd proposal to give three cheers for 'Thorley's Food for Cattle.' An attempt was made to proceed to the regular business of the day, but it was impossible while the 'white coat' still polluted the region with his presence. At last the unhappy man, pursued with yells of hate, fled from the theatre, using gestures expressive of indignation and dismay. I believe, however, that he subsequently made his appearance once more in a quieter garb, and that he was able to enjoy the rest of the proceedings, in the earlier part of which he had so prominently taken share.

He was certainly the lion of the day, much more so than any of the 'illustrious strangers' who received the honorary degree. The undergraduates did not recognise many of them, and demanded 'Who is he?' 'Where did he come from?' apparently ignorant that Sir James Simpson discovered chloroform, that Professor Thompson is perhaps the greatest electrician of the age, that Dr. Hooker, of Kew, is one of our most distinguished naturalists. They know something, however, about Professor Phillips, as he happens to live at Oxford, and something about Mr. Merivale, because he has a great deal to do with Roman history. It is not to be expected, however, and not desirable, that the youthful undergraduates should know all about the great lights of modern science. They may be proud of their ignorance, and they have certainly a great deal to be proud of. They were much more at home in cheering the ladies, the ladies in 'white,' 'blue,'

'pink,' 'green,' 'black,' 'red,' 'mauve,' 'violet.' They were all cheered, many of them many times over. The political chiefs of the day, who generally receive great attention, were subordinate to the ladies.

There are two sorts of amusements during the Commemoration, which respectively best suit the younger and the old—the loud amusements of balls and theatricals, and the quieter pursuits of exploring libraries and galleries. I have had my share among shooting stars and glorious Apollos, and I am now rather beginning to moon among the books, and to show other signs of premature decrepitude. Blades and Gushington were thoroughly absorbed in private theatricals, which cropped up during this Commemoration to an extent hardly within previous collegiate remembrance. I noticed that Gush insisted that whenever a scene at an inn was produced, and such scenes occur pretty frequently, there should be real wineing and no make-believe; and it was noticed that such scenes were generally protracted beyond other portions of the entertainment. But the men were very impartial in giving a due share of attention to all the amusements, and the ladies were not a whit behind, affording, in fact, some little reason for Pope's unkind cut that each one of them is a rake at heart. The subject is full of awe and wonder; how a languid being, who in a general sort of way is ordered chicken-broth and carriage exercise, can perform during Commemoration an amount of feats which would tax the energies and endurance of a prizefighter. There is little Letitia Grant, for instance, who goes in for being rather delicate. She was at the Christ Church ball on Tuesday night, and danced away 'till the breath of the morning stirred, and the planet of love was on high.' It was about five o'clock in the morning when she and old Lady Grant went away, and by ten o'clock she was as fresh as a daisy at the Sheldonian, with the slightest dash of dew on her gloves from the pelting rain outside. Then she made a very creditable lunch in hall, and seemed to have a very

good notion of lobster salad and Moselle cup. Afterwards she took her part in the promenade in New College Gardens in the afternoon for the masonic fête, and after a snug little dinner in rooms, where she was good enough after coffee to sing us some charming songs, being doubtful whether she should patronise the Shooting Stars in Alfred Street, or go to the ball at the Clarendon Hotel, she happily compromised the matter by attending both. The pace is terrific, and little Letitia will become delicate in real earnest if she does not take care. Extensive flirting ought to be enumerated either among her amusements or her serious occupations. She is good enough to honour me with a certain amount of intimacy, and to bestow little confidences, of which I hope I am not altogether unworthy. But Letitia is a dangerous character, and ought to be abolished. She whispered to me that Jenkins of Exeter had proposed to her when they had gone over with a party to Cumnor, and they had grown pathetic together about the sorrows of Amy Robsart. She had accepted him, she said; he was such a nice man, and had such nice principles. I congratulated her. Jenkins is rather a spoony poetical sort of fellow, but there is no harm in him. By-and-by she told me that an Oriel man, of extremely solvent parentage, had also proposed to her in the intervals of a dance. 'And what did you say to him, Letitia?' I inquired. Letitia responded that she had, furthermore, accepted the Oriel man. I pointed out to the young lady that she was placing herself in a position of some embarrassment. She admitted it, and in polished phraseology expressed her regret for the unfortunate concatenation of circumstances. I indicated to Letitia that her simplest and most obvious course was to fling over her present brace of accepted suitors, and accept her faithful and attached Bobus, who would see her safe out of her difficulties. Letitia only gave a satiric smile. There are no secrets between us, and she is unfortunately aware of my state of chronic impetuosity.

But I think there was other company and other scenes which I liked still better than these. That dear old lady, our good Dean's wife at home, and her quiet good girls were much more enjoyable people than Letitia. It was very pleasant to get out of the broad glare of the streets into the twilight gloom of cloisters, chapels, and libraries; to point to the shelves groaning, as Gibbon says, under Benedictine editions; to turn over illuminated missals; to examine the cups and croziers of Plantagenet reigns; to see the picturesque remnants of plate saved from the silver and gold melted down to serve the good cause of Charles I.; to look at the altarpieces of chapels and the heirlooms of portraits belonging to the Houses of Masters and Presidents; to show the stories of Arthurean romance emblazoned on the walls of the Union; to look over the old drawings of Raphael and the new glories of the pre-Raphaelite school; to pause, in quiet spots, amid the murmur of water and the rustling of boughs, to gather in the famous panoramic view of the fair city. Then these good girls had set their hearts on seeing certain things and places. They must behold that identical lantern which Guy Fawkes had in his hand when he was preparing to blow up the houses of Parliament, and they did see it; next they must see Dr. Pusey in the flesh, and convulsive efforts must be made to procure Dr. Pusey's autograph; they must view the Martyrs' memorial; they must see the new chapels of Exeter and Balliol; they must go to Brasenose and see the rooms which Reginald Heber used to occupy. The girls were wild about Heber; and at first I was not certain whether the Martyrs' memorial had not had something to do with him, and whether he might not have been burnt alive under Philip and Mary. But it seems it was not so very long ago since he was at Oxford; the Dean's wife recollected him very perfectly. Talk about a man like Heber lets a fellow down a bit. He was no older than I was when he was famous and doing a world of good; I do not

care about the fame, but it bothers me that I am not doing some good in the world, none even to myself. The Dean's wife also knew Dr. Routh, the last President of Magdalen, who survived to his hundredth year; they have his portrait in the gallery of the Bodleian (where we saw Guy Fawkes' lantern), taken when he was ninety-six. The Dean's people told me that old Routh used to know another old President who also lasted till nearly a hundred, and used to talk as familiarly of the later Caroline even as we ourselves could of the prospects of Reform and the chances of Liberals and Derbyites.

It was also interesting to observe the conflicting shades of character and the varying opinions among seniors and juniors. Alas! that the stern truth should obtrude itself upon my notice, that I am one of the seniors, and am fast developing symptoms of fogeyism. I am bound to say that the fathers and that sort of heavy people behaved very well; there was a good deal of money to pay, and they paid very handsomely; getting the best of everything and plenty of the best. Yet the old fellows often spoke remorsefully, hinting at the chances they had thrown away; of the good things they had lost only by a fluke, and the decidedly inferior men who had become judges and bishops. The kind of elderly party who most enjoyed himself was the superannuation don, who had brought his girls from his country living to visit his boys at college. This kind of man had really taken from Oxford all that Oxford had to give him, and

now, with reasonable elation, he looked upon the scene of his old triumphs, and called upon his children to rejoice with him and follow in his footprints of success. Among all the fathers, of every sort and description, one discerned this element of parental anxiety working steadfastly and strongly; great anxiety also that the young ones should avoid the snares and perils that beset them, and on which they themselves had made some sort of shipwreck. This feeling, though subdued and kept in the background, was constantly peeping out during the Commemoration, and was showing itself in tender manifestations. Through the subtle influence of association, this feeling even affected myself, and having no offspring, I concentrated any parental solitudes I could command on my little brother Tommy. I was really very glad to see Tommy, even in the midst of the festivities of the Commemoration week, plunging into the new edition of Grant's 'Ethics of Aristotle,' and then holding a prolonged conversation with a small Balliol man, on the Unconditioned and the Unknowable. It was all the unknowable to me, and no mistake. It is no fault of Tommy's, I reflected to myself, that Nature, while giving me a good profile and abundant hair, has, in Tommy's case, devoted greater attention to the interior lining and furniture of the human skull. As I said at the beginning, I forgive little Tommy, and hope he will do something—and indeed it wants it sadly—towards raising the intellectual reputation, now at a low ebb, of the house of Bobus.



MANSION HOUSE HOSPITALITIES.

A GOOD many people are apt to suppose that the life of the Lord Mayor of London is one continued round of feasting, a year of perpetual turtle and champagne. That is an error; but even if the supposition were correct, the life of a hospitable Lord Mayor would be sufficiently arduous. Let any master or mistress of a household realize to himself or herself, if he or she can, an unceasing round of parties—say only for a single week. Imagine what it would be to have to give a grand dinner-party every day, with a reception to follow. Take the most favourable view of the matter, and say that you have servants to look after everything—a secretary to send out the invitations and arrange the guests at table; an experienced *chef* to superintend the culinary department; a trustworthy and judicious butler to dispense the wine, and a well-drilled staff of footmen to wait at table. Possessing all these advantages, in addition to abundant means, you have still a vast deal of labour to go through. Indeed you have all the labour of one of your most hardly worked servants, plus responsibility and anxiety. You have to dress and receive your guests, to preside at table, and use your best endeavours to promote the enjoyment of every individual at table; to be constantly on the watch to offer civilities and say pleasant things. Every one who has given a *grand* party knows how irksome is all this; how little he can enjoy *himself*; how relieved he feels when the last guest departs, and he is enabled to sit down and have a quiet half-hour before going to bed.

But the Lord Mayor of London is condemned to go through a whole year of such festivities, and at most of his dinners he is called upon to make on an average half a dozen speeches, frequently in the presence of the most illustrious personages and greatest orators of the day. Some idea of the festive duties of the Lord Mayor of London may be gathered from the fact, that he is

expected, as a matter of duty, to entertain at dinner during his year of office 4000 persons. Amongst the various public bodies invited to special banquets may be mentioned Her Majesty's Ministers, the Bench of Bishops, the Judges, the Aldermen and Sheriffs, the members of the Common Council, &c. In addition to these, about 1000 private persons are entertained at lunch, at dinner, and at evening parties.

The festivities of each new Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress begin in the month of November with the grand banquet in the Guildhall; and it may be said that they never cease until the 8th of November of the following year, when the retiring majesty of the City gives a farewell entertainment to his immediate friends. Lord Mayors' feasts have always been famous for their magnificence and prodigality. The banquet given on the 9th of November last year by the present much-esteemed occupant of the civic chair, cost no less a sum than 1639*l*. The whole expenses of the day, including the charges for the procession, amounted to 3102*l*. 14*s*. 4*d*. Some of the items are startling. For example, the gas fittings for the occasion cost 105*l*., and the gas—for one evening—100*l*. Here are a few other curious items from the bill—

	£	s.	d.
Bellringers at churches . . .	21	0	0
Gold pens and pencil-cases for chairman and secretary of Lord Mayor's committee . . .	9	15	0
Refreshments for troops, police, &c.	63	0	0
Decorating Ludgate Hill . . .	40	0	0
Music in Hall	50	19	0
Music in streets	100	0	0
Printing dinner tickets . . .	25	0	0

It is interesting to compare a Lord Mayor's bill of expenses of the present day with one 'delivered' in the last century. The following is copied from a MS. account of the charges incurred by the Lord Mayor in 1792:—

'Lord Mayor's dress, two wigs, 9*l*. 9*s*.; a velvet suit, 54*l*. 8*s*.; other clothes, 117*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*.; hats and

hose, 9*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.*; a scarlet robe, 14*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*; a velvet ditto, 12*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*; a gold chain, 63*l.*; steel buckles, 5*l.* 5*s.*; a steel sword, 6*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*; hair dressing, 16*l.* 16*s.* 11*d.* Total for the personal adornment of the Lord Mayor, 309*l.* 2*s.* 3*d.*

The following will be interesting to the ladies:—

'Lady Mayoress's dress—A hoop, 2*l.* 16*s.*; point ruffles, 12*l.* 12*s.*; tulle blonde ditto, 7*l.* 7*s.*; blonde handkerchief, 6*l.* 6*s.*; a fan, 3*l.* 3*s.*; a capp and lappets, 7*l.*; hair ornaments, 34*l.*; a cloak and sundries, 26*l.* 17*s.*; a capp, 7*l.* 18*s.*; a silk gown for the 9th of November at 3½ guineas a yard, 41*l.* 6*s.*; a petticoat (Madame Beavais), 35*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.*; a gold chain, 57*l.* 15*s.*; silver silk, 13*l.*; clouded sattin, 5*l.* 10*s.*; a petticoat for Easter, 29*l.* 1*s.*; hair dressing, &c., 13*l.* 2*s.* 3*d.* Total for the personal adornment of the Lady Mayoress, 416*l.* 4*s.* The servants' dresses came to 724*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.* The wine for this year cost 1309*l.* 12*s.* 10*d.* The wine most in favour seems to have been port, of which 8 pipes were consumed. Of hock only 35 dozen were drunk, and of champagne 40 dozen. The quantity of wine consumed now-a-days is probably about four times as much as it was then; not that the modern cits are heavier drinkers, but civic hospitalities take a wider range.

One of the first items that meets the eye in the bill of fare of the Guildhall banquet of last year, 1865, is as follows—'250 tureens of real turtle.'

Let us go back to Elizabeth's reign for a contrast.

	s.	d.
8 stone of beef, at 8 <i>d.</i> a stone, and a sirloin	5	4
2 collars of brawn	1	0
A hind-quarter of veal	0	10
A leg of mutton	0	5
6 pullets	1	0
4 couple of rabbits	1	8
4 brace of partridges	2	0
1 barrel of strong beer	2	6
2 gallons of white wine	2	0

The whole cost of the provisions for this civic banquet amounted to 1*l.* 12*s.* 9*d.* But, of course, money was of much greater value in those days. Oranges must have been an

expensive luxury in Queen Elizabeth's time, yet in this bill six oranges are charged only 'two-pence.'

It might be interesting also to contrast the civic oratory of the two periods we now have in view, viz., those of Elizabeth and Victoria. For the graceful and courtly speeches delivered by Lord Mayor Phillips on many occasions during the present year we must refer the reader to the newspapers. For a specimen of Elizabethan oratory, we dig the following from the pages of Hone. It was delivered by Mr. John Martyn, a wealthy and honest man of Norwich:—

'Maister Mayor of Norwich, and it please your worship, you have feasted us like a king. God bless the Queen's grace. We have fed plentifully, and now, whilom I can speak plain English, I heartily thank you, Maister Mayor, and so do we all. Answer, boys, answer! Your beer is pleasant and potent, and will soon catch us by the caput and stop our manners, and so huzza for the Queen's majesty's grace and all her bonny-brow'd dames of honour. Huzza for Maister Mayor and our good dame Mayoress! His noble grace' (the Duke of Norfolk), 'there he is, God bless him, and all this jolly company. To all our friends round country who have a penny in their purse and an English heart in their bodies, to keep out Spanish dons and papists with their faggots to burn our whiskers. Shove it about, twirl your cup-cases, handle your jugs, and huzza for Maister Mayor and his brethren your worships!'

It is very evident, we think, that the beer had caught Maister John Martyn by the caput already.

Until the beginning of the present century the City feasts combined a good deal of the barbaric with the magnificent and prodigal, and the cits were rather apt to finish up with a debauch. Drunkenness was no great offence—indeed, was rather a fashionable vice, down to the days of the Regency. 'Even within the Guildhall,' we are told, the gentlemen guests of the last century got 'glorious.' At Brasse Crosby's dinner,

in 1770, a great number of young fellows, after dinner was over, being heated with liquor, got upon the hustings, and because they were not supplied with wine, broke all the bottles and glasses within their reach. At this time the court and ministry were out of favour in the City, and till the year 1776 no member of the Government received an invitation to dine at the Guildhall. The last dinner of the last century was a remarkable one. The outgoing and incoming mayors were jovial fellows and especial lovers of good tobacco. This is said to have been the only dinner at which smoking was allowed; and when the two mayors lit their pipes at the same candle, some wits who were of the company said it reminded them of the two kings of Brentford sniffing at the same nosegay.

In Queen Mary's time the City feasts had become so expensive, and the outlay so excessive, that a decree was passed to decrease the number of dishes, and to confine the dessert to simple hippocras and wafers. This decree, however, soon ceased to be in force, and the prodigality became greater than ever. One of the jolliest days ever passed in Guildhall was that on which George III. and Queen Charlotte, in the first year of their reign, dined with the new Lord Mayor. They had previously witnessed the show from Mr. Barclay's windows in Cheapside. 'The house was full of young Quakeresses; the king and his brothers kissed them all, and wonderful was the enjoyment, and the coyness and audacity, and the general fun of the thing. At the subsequent dinner the king and the royal family dined at a table apart, waited on by seven aldermen, like Nero with his wife and relations, tended by the obsequious senators to change their plates. Then the king, through the City crier, drank to the City of London, to music from Judas Maccabeus, and the Lord Mayor, from the bottom of the hall, drank to his royal guests, when the music immediately played the latter part of Mr. Handel's coronation anthem of God save the King. Then followed the grand ball, opened by

the frolicsome Duke of York, who in a minuet had the Lady Mayoress for a partner. The royal family did not take their departure until one o'clock in the morning, by which time the state coachman had got so drunk that he nearly upset the royal chariot in dashing through the gateway of St. James's.'

A very gorgeous feast was given in the Guildhall to Lord Nelson in 1801; but the greatest magnificence was undoubtedly attained when the City entertained her present most gracious Majesty on her accession in 1837. The centre of the Queen's table consisted of a splendid plateau of looking-glass, richly gilt in or-molu. Exactly opposite to the royal seat set apart for her Majesty was a circular ornament of twelve small golden lions, surmounted by four allegorical figures wearing the four collars of the orders of Great Britain, and supporting a crimson velvet cushion, whereon was placed a small diadem studded with jewels, together with the whole coronation regalia of England; directly under the latter, upon a square tablet of cerulean blue, between the two figures in front of the chair, was a circle of diamonds upon rays of gold, composing the word 'Victoria.' In the centre of this circle were the new arms of England, enamelled in white and gold; at the four corners were the stars of the order of the Garter, of St. Patrick, the Thistle, and the Bath. On the opposite side, between the two figures, was the circular motto, *Domine dirige nos*, and in the centre the arms of the City. Upon each side of the pedestal was a golden wreath, with the names of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs. The gold plate for the royal table was furnished by Emanuel Brothers (then of Bevis Marks), and comprised a magnificent epergne supported by figures of the three graces, on sphinx pedestals surrounded by a wreath of vine and oak leaves. On either side were two massive candelabra on which the royal arms were displayed in burnished gold. The soup and sauce tureens, cellarets, dishes and covers, were all of gold. The Queen's dessert service comprised

twenty-three gold dishes of the richest design. The whole of the gold and silver plate belonging to the City companies was used at this feast, and probably on no occasion, either before or since, has any table been so gorgeously and expensively furnished. And yet there was a lingering touch of barbarism about the feast; for while gold and silver and precious stones were heaped upon the tables in reckless profusion, some of the gold plates were flanked by steel forks!

In former times, civic hospitalities, though magnificent enough, were somewhat rough and rude. The era of refinement may be said to date from the erection of the present Mansion House in 1740. Previous to that date the Lord Mayors dispensed their hospitality out of doors at the Guildhall and other places, where, their feasts being of a public character, the restraints of private society were not always scrupulously observed. But when the Mansion House was built and furnished, the chief magistrate held state in his own palace, and much of his hospitality began to assume a private and domestic character.

The Mansion House, where so many elegant entertainments are now given, is indeed worthy to be called a palace. Blocked in as it is among a mass of business houses in the very thick of the City, the building, in its outward aspect, gives no idea of the magnificence of the apartments within. The first stone of the building was laid in 1739, and the whole was completed and furnished in the mayoralty of Sir Crisp Gascoigne, who was the first Lord Mayor who resided in it. The style of the interior is Italian, with a lofty court in the centre, leading to the various state apartments, two of the principal being known as the Venetian Parlour and the Egyptian Hall. The latter is one of the finest apartments, as regards its proportions and strictly classical style, to be found in all Europe. It was called the Egyptian Hall because in its construction it exactly corresponds with the Egyptian Hall described by Vitruvius. The whole cost of building and fur-

nishing the Mansion House was 80,000*l*.

The elegance of Mansion House hospitalities of late years has done much to remove from the City magistrates the old reproach of being a corporation of mere turtle and champagne guzzlers; and this improvement in civic manners has culminated this year in the reign of Lord Mayor Phillips, in a degree of dignified refinement which places the Mansion House on the same footing with the royal palace of the sovereign. Courtly etiquette is strictly observed at the Mansion House, and yet with a hearty affability which puts every one at his ease. The title of Merchant Prince has been well realized in Lord Mayor Phillips, at once in the magnificence of his entertainments and in his manners. As a speaker, the present Lord Mayor has held his own even by the side of the orators of Parliament, and in conjunction with the accomplished Lady Mayoress and their daughter, Mrs. Barnet, he has been able to give a welcome to distinguished foreigners in all the languages known to polite society. One of the most pleasing Mansion House entertainments of the present season was a juvenile ball given on the 21st of May. Like the fine old English gentleman, Lord Mayor Phillips,

‘ While he feasted all the great,
He ne’er forgot the small.’

The Egyptian Hall never presented a more charming appearance than on this occasion, when it was filled almost exclusively with chubby-faced schoolboys and sylph-like maidens of from seven to blushing fifteen. There were nearly 900 of them altogether, sons and daughters of the citizens; and the Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress, and Mrs. Barnet were goodnatured enough to stand in the court for nearly three hours—one or other being always present—to give each individual guest a reception. The arrival of the juveniles at the grand entrance attracted a great crowd of spectators, who, though condemned to stand outside in the rain, were in a position to witness one of the most

picturesque features of this entertainment. It rained in torrents; and notwithstanding that an awning had been thrown over the balcony, the steps were puddled with water. This rendered it necessary that all the little fairies in white satin shoes should be lifted from their carriages and carried up the steps. This gallant duty was voluntarily performed by some big, goodnatured members of the City police force, against whose rough blue uniforms the dainty finery of the fairies stood out with striking effect. This scene would have made a capital picture, but it would require colour—the colour of the paint-box—to bring out the full force of the contrast. So our artist has chosen to depict the grand staircase as it appeared about half-past nine o'clock, when the juveniles were streaming up to

supper. There were nearly 900 guests, and the supper-room held only 220; so when the room was full, a bar was placed across the door, and the crowd upon the stairs had to wait their turn. In this way, following the rule of the street traffic, the whole of the guests passed on to supper in a continuous stream, and to the very last, by an almost magical arrangement of the servants, a fresh bottle of champagne, a fresh dish of fowl, lobster salad, &c., instantly replaced the wine and dishes that had been consumed.

It was a gracious thing in the Lady Mayoress to give the juveniles an opportunity of sharing in the hospitalities of the Mansion House, and her juvenile ball will long be remembered as one of the most elegant and graceful entertainments ever given in the City.

H.

A TALE OF ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

WHERE some do wrong, and some do write,
 I quill-drive for my betters;
 St. Martin's sees from morn to night
 No poorer man of letters.

Three hundred thousand letters come,
Three hundred thousand go;
The quick rat-tat for me is dumb,
I've neither friend nor foe.

I deck my desk with fancy's forms,
Like all the other clerks;
When, lo! one day a voice informs,
'Here is a note from Berks!'

'Tis the address I first survey,
And then I scan the seal;
Impatience brooks no long delay,
'Tis from Sir Lemon Peel!

The office calls me long her own,
No kindly demonstration
Sir Lemon Peel to me has shown,
And yet he's my relation.

'Dear sir, your relatives you shun,
Consider all we feel;
Be kind enough to bring your gun,
Yours truly, Lemon Peel.'

My upper garment's near in rags,
That coat of every day;
A little nearer are my bags,
Those trousers old and grey.

My leave obtained, I rush insane
On thorns without the roses,
As fast as able for a cane,
And then I rush to Moses.

The shopman lavishes on me
A hail of honied smiles;
'You're in the nick of time to see
The sweetest thing in tiles!'

'Tile me no tiles—some dulcet vest—
Next fetch a coat of male,
Like other swells wear when they're drest,
Whereby there hangs a tail.'

'The coat for you is twelve and three,
And splendidly it sits;
The vest and trousers leave to me,
I guarantee they fits.'

Behind his ear he sticks a pen,
And then selects me togs,
Designed by Fate to please the men,
And terrify the dogs.

In time for dinner next I set
Full sail for Lemon Peel;
'I'm so delighted that we've met,
Will you take Miss O'Neill?'

Some whisper, 'He does look a gent,'
Between the soup and veal;
I gather what is kindly meant,
And look at Miss O'Neill.

When rustling step and closing door
 Proclaim the ended meal,
 And men say all they thought before,
 I worship Miss O'Neill.

Soon, when Sir Lemon's weary guest
 The friendly sheets conceal,
 A happy vision cheers my rest,
 I dream of Miss O'Neill.

Next morn I hear with pretty frown
 Her say to Lord de Loop,
 'You must not go and hit the brown,
 You've not been through your hoop.'

Entranced I stand, how queer I feel,
 The keeper calls in vain;
 Oh! let me kneel to Miss O'Neill,
 I'm sure it's going to rain.

But then they lead me such a dance,
 There breaks no friendly storm;
 Soon shouts the keeper, 'Now's your chance,
 A hare upon her form.'

I stare five minutes ere I blaze,
 To kill her is my aim;
 But what—as William Shakspeare says—
 'What is there in a name?'

'Well done!' the keeper bland observes,
 'The weather's rather dark:—
 A snub such love as mine deserves,
 I am a shabby clerk.

As we come in, I long to dine,
 Yet do not long for dinner;
 Oh! how I wish that she was mine,
 I am a hardened sinner.

Oh, bliss! 'tis I who take her down,
 She wears such lovely flowers;
 She asks me what I do in town—
 How spend my leisure hours?

She talks so kindly through the fish,
 So sweetly through the curry,
 I hardly taste a single dish,
 I am in such a flurry!

When, gone the apples, gone the cheese,
 The ladies go away;
 She says, 'I am a prisoner, please;
 Do you make any stay?'

Later we dance; the giddy whiz
 Does leave me nearly dead;
 I think the second time it is
 That she has turned my head!

But 'midst that whiz and 'midst that whirr,
 I tell her all I feel;
 I whisper that I'd live for her,
 Or die for Miss O'Neill!

'From early morn I work all day,
Till gently falls the night;
My evenings are not very gay,
With scanty fire and light.

'Clerks who are swells treat me with scorn,
Shrug high, and say "Good heavens!"
Because I don't enjoy Cremorne,
And never go to Evans.

'I have no funds (they give me pain,
And cut me in the Park),
Only some little heart, and brain . . .
Sufficient for a clerk.'

The lady turns to blush a space,
As other maidens do;
Then sweetly looks into my face,
'I think your words are true.

'The uncouth coat, th' unpractised air,
Do not conceal the man;
I judge you not by what you wear,'
Her falt'ring answer ran.

'The nobler aim, the better part,
The glorious name of wife;
No idle tales about the heart,
The purpose of a life:

'Give me but these, my wealth is yours,
To work our common weal;
'Tis pledged, as long as life endures,
The troth of Miss O'Neill.'

* * * *

The women turn their noses up,
The men *their* features down;
Say they, 'Was ever such a pup?—
A queen to wed a clown!'

* * * *

Next morning, o'er the rounded stones,
Lisps sweetly soft the tide;
But sweeter far the loving tones
Of my dear cherished bride.

* * * *

I'll thank the fellow (when again
The happiest of clerks,
I go like sheep unto my pen)
That brought that note from Berks.

A. G. D.

SUMMER EVE.

FAIR Summer Eve! sweet as the purling stream,
To parchèd lips, amid Arabian sand,
Calm as the silent echoes of a dream,
That wafts the exile to his native land.

Kind Summer Eve! life's hard realities
Are melted by thy spirit-soothing breath,
The stricken heart forgets its miseries,
The dying dreams not hopelessly of death.

Cool Summer Eve! thy gentle murmurings
Tell me of happy moments, ever fled,
Nor heed the stubborn course of Saturn's wings,
But dare the footsteps of the past to tread.

Sweet Summer Eve! I've sat and watched thee die,
And one by one, the timid starlets shine,
Celestial rivals of her glistening eye,
Whose loving hand was fondly clasped in mine.

Dear Summer Eve! we sat and watched thee die,
From twilight shadows into glooms of night,
Nor recked how fast the happy hours could fly,
When love had lent his pinions to their flight.

Still Summer Eve! thou hast full many a tale;
Fain would I, lingering, hearken yet to thee,
Charmer of grief, though other loves may fail,
A welcome thou wilt ever meet from me.

G. B. R.

WHO WINS MISS BURTON?

A Tale of the London Season.

CHAPTER V.

AGATHA did not weep, as she had done the night before, she only felt despair, utter despair.

If Mr. Lynn had been kind to her, she might have told him all, and he might have saved her, and they might have been happy; but now her only chance was gone, and she had nothing left. She no longer cared to continue her walk, so she went home again and locked herself in her own room. Her mother was not aware that she had been out, and it was late in the day before she was disturbed. Lord Dunmore had arrived, and was waiting to see her. She sent a message to tell her mother to make what excuse she liked, but that she could not, and would not, see the earl that day. Mrs. Burton was fain to say that her darling Agatha had so severe a headache, in consequence of the fatigues of the ball, that she had positively forbidden her leaving her room.

All that day was passed by Agatha in a kind of weary unrest. Towards night, worn out both in body and mind, she fell into a long, deep sleep, and dreamed she was at St. Helens, sitting on the sand-bank, and that Mr. Lynn was reading 'Locksley Hall,' and that he compared her to Amy, and told her that he had been thinking that their future would be the same. Then she had upbraided him with his want of trust, and accused him of not loving her; and so he had disappeared, and Lord Dunmore had come, and opening a case of glittering jewels, offered them to her; and she had taken them in her hand and was going to put them on, when they turned into coils of living snakes; and then she tried to throw them from her, and shrieking in her horror, awoke.

The next day Lord Dunmore was no longer to be put off; and, at her mother's entreaty, Agatha was ready

to receive him when his cab drove to the door.

She had, by a strong effort of will, so far conquered herself that, outwardly, she was much the same as usual. Lord Dunmore was most eager to know how she was, and why she had been ill: he was suspicious about the ball, and suspicious about the man he had just caught a glimpse of standing in the doorway; but Agatha laughed it off, said she was faint from the heat, and called his attention to her rapid recovery. At last he was soothed, and gave Agatha a costly diamond ring, and their engagement was thus metaphorically sealed.

It was a matter of course that all Mrs. Burton's friends should be loud in their congratulations, and Agatha became a person of immense importance. Even Lady Dunmore was obliged, or thought it her best policy, to write a letter to her daughter-in-law elect, which letter, although it did not actually say so, gave a general impression that Agatha ought to consider herself the most fortunate woman in England, and that her gratitude should be evinced accordingly.

Lady Dunmore was still in Paris, and finding that it was too late to save her son, as she said to her intimate friends with real tears in her eyes, from two of the most designing women she had ever met, she thought it best to remain where she was.

Lord Dunmore was anxious to be married immediately: whenever he made up his mind that he wanted a thing, he never rested until he had obtained it. When he was a child, this propensity made him a terror to the nurses and governesses, as his choice would often fall on things impossible for him to have, and many and dire would be the scenes that ensued. When Lord Dunmore proposed that the wedding should

take place at once, Agatha begged that it might be postponed until the spring; but of this he would not hear, and was so really annoyed, that Mrs. Burton was in an agony lest he should get out of it altogether, and entreated Agatha not to be rash.

Agatha was just in that state of mind that she did not feel as if she really cared what happened; and although to gain time would have been a relief, still, as it was to be, perhaps, after all, it would be better for it to take place at once. The first week in December was accordingly fixed upon, and the preparations were begun.

After remaining a few weeks longer in Brighton, Mrs. Burton thought it would be more convenient to return to London, as there were so many things to be arranged which could be done so much better on the spot, and Agatha was so tired of Lord Dunmore's constant society, that she eagerly acquiesced in a plan that might give her some time to herself. Of course Lord Dunmore accompanied them to London, and remained a few days to see them settled in Hertford Street, May Fair, where Mrs. Burton had taken a house until after the wedding; but there he left them, and went back to Dunmore Castle for some shooting, taking Captain Burton with him; so Agatha and her mother were alone.

Lord Dunmore had, during his stay in London, given Agatha the most costly presents, had chosen her opera-box for the next season, had been to Tattersall's to look at riding-horses for her especial use, and, indeed, had been, as Mrs. Burton said, quite lavish in his generosity; but Agatha he now considered as his own personal property, so that giving to her was, in fact, the same as giving to himself, a species of benevolence in which he had never been known to fail.

Captain Valentine Burton had come up to town to meet Lord Dunmore, and had given his mother to understand that his marriage with Miss Chatterton was, after all, not unlikely, as her parents had given him every encouragement since the

announcement of Agatha's engagement, and that as the young lady herself was desperate about him, he thought her eighty thousand pounds might be considered within reach; and Mrs. Burton felt really grateful that she had taken so much pains to secure the happiness of both her children. Agatha and Mrs. Burton were sitting, one afternoon late in November, over the drawing-room fire in Hertford Street, each apparently occupied with her own train of thought, when the footman brought in a letter, which he handed to Mrs. Burton. Agatha was listlessly turning over the pages of a book, but she was in reality not reading.

'Really, Agatha, you ought to consider yourself a most fortunate girl,' said Mrs. Burton, looking up from the perusal of her letter; 'Valentine gives a most wonderful account of Dunmore Castle, and says it is quite regal in its appointments.'

Agatha made some slight response, and her mother continued, reading parts of the letter aloud:—

"Tell Agatha that the reception rooms are all fitted up with sky-blue velvet and white satin, and that the ceiling and walls are painted in fresco, and most beautiful of their kind; that her boudoir looks too pretty for use, with its pink silk and white lace."

Agatha smiled; but her heart carried her in imagination to the Red House in the High Street of Denborough, and she felt that she loved its old-fashioned furniture a thousand times better than she could ever love the costliest belongings of Lord Dunmore.

But Mrs. Burton was delighted. She stirred the fire until it leaped up into a bright blaze, shutting out the premature darkness of the day caused by the dense yellow fog peculiar to the million-peopled city, and prepared herself to discuss more fully Captain Burton's letter. Agatha laid down the book, and listened, Mrs. Burton doing most of the conversation, and trying to imagine how everything would be at Dunmore, when Agatha was mistress; and thus the rest of the day

wore on, and lights were brought, and dinner announced. After dinner, Mrs. Burton talked it all over again, till Agatha, weary and heart-sick, went to bed and dreamt that she was leaning on Lord Dunmore's arm, and that they were walking up the old High Street of Denborough, and that quite suddenly they met Mr. Lynn; that she put out her hand, but that he passed her by, and did not even seem to know her.

In the morning the fog was still so thick that it was almost impossible to see out of the window. Mrs. Burton, wrapped in a red shawl, declared, as she poured the water out of the steaming silver kettle into the teacups, that the fireside was the only place on such a day, but that she had some duty-calls that must be made that afternoon, that she would be obliged to sacrifice her personal feelings, and that Agatha must accompany her.

When the letters were brought in, Agatha took hers up, as she always did now, with a feeling of indifference. Lord Dunmore's almost illegible handwriting was there as usual, but she passed it over: another riveted her attention—it was Mrs. Vernor's. She had heard occasionally from Mrs. Vernor since leaving St. Helens; she had written to tell her of her engagement, and received her really heartfelt best wishes; and although she rarely mentioned the Lynns, every fresh letter inspired Agatha with the hope that she might tell her something about them.

This morning she held the letter a few minutes in her hand before opening it, and looked in vain for the Denborough postmark. It was not there, simply the London one. A few hurried lines inside explained that Mrs. Vernor had unexpectedly been summoned to town by one of her early pupils, who was dying. She wanted to see Agatha, and would go to Hertford Street the moment she had any spare time. She did not ask Agatha to go and see her, but Agatha determined at once to do so, and run the risk of finding her at home.

'Mamma,' said Agatha, 'need I

pay those visits with you this afternoon?'

'What has happened to prevent it, Agatha?'

'Mrs. Vernor is in town, and I must go and see her.'

'It is very provoking,' replied Mrs. Burton, 'but people always will turn up when they are least wanted. Why could not to-morrow do? To-morrow I shall be out, and you will be alone.'

'Oh, I could not be happy to lose a day,' said Agatha, 'more especially as I do not know how long she means to remain.'

Mrs. Burton thought it best not to contradict her, so it was arranged that she was to leave her at Mrs. Vernor's, whilst she paid the visits, and then to call for her again.

The direction given was to a small crescent in Bayswater; a place, as Mrs. Burton said, of which she had never heard the name, and which she only hoped her coachman might be able to find, and then she asked what was Lord Dunmore's news.

Agatha had forgotten to open the letter, but she did so at once on being reminded, and tried to appear interested in a photograph of her future home—a magnificent castle, standing high, surrounded by noble trees and beautiful gardens, with a broad lake winding away in the distance.

Mrs. Burton was, of course, enchanted, and told Agatha that she must have given her a fairy god-mother; and Agatha laughed and said that, after all, she might find out one day that she was only Cinderella.

If Agatha might have chosen, she would have put on her plainest winter dress that afternoon; but Mrs. Burton wished her to pay a visit of state in Belgrave Square before she went to Bayswater, and to dress as befitted the future Lady Dunmore, it being on one of Lord Dunmore's great friends that they were to call; and Cameron having laid out a violet silk dress, a violet velvet mantle, and a white bonnet with violet feathers, there was nothing left but to put them on.

Lady Mary Haughton was not at home, so they drove to Bayswater. Mrs. Vernor being at home, Agatha

got out, and Mrs. Burton drove away, promising to call again in an hour. Agatha followed the maid into the sitting-room: a dim figure was standing before her, the door shut behind her, and she was just about to exclaim Mrs. Vernor, when her voice failed, the room went into darkness;—the figure was not Mrs. Vernor, it was Mr. Lynn.

'I have made a mistake,' she said, desperately; 'I came to see Mrs. Vernor, and I thought——' But she was trembling so violently that she was obliged to grasp the back of the chair to save herself from falling.

Whatever Mr. Lynn's first feelings may have been, he mastered them quickly.

'You thought rightly, Miss Burton, Mrs. Vernor is here, or will be in a few minutes.' And then he bowed, without offering his hand, and turning a chair round, asked her to sit down.

Agatha obeyed. She did not know if she were very happy, or very miserable; she was in a dream. For a few minutes both were silent, then Mr. Lynn took out his watch.

'I ordered the carriage to call for me again in an hour,' said Agatha, 'hearing that Mrs. Vernor was at home.'

'I fear there may have been some mistake,' replied Mr. Lynn; 'but I will go and see.' And he left the room.

Agatha covered her face with both her hands, and tried to think what she ought to do, or ought to say. Mr. Lynn was only absent a few minutes.

'I am afraid,' he said, on re-entering, 'that some blunder has been made. Mrs. Vernor is out, and her return uncertain.'

Agatha rose. 'I had better go,' she said.

For a moment Mr. Lynn looked at her as he used to do in the old St. Helens days, and seemed about to speak, but he checked himself, and then said, coldly,

'I fear either alternative will be equally unwelcome—returning alone in a cab, or waiting for your own carriage.'

'I think,' said Agatha 'it would be best to wait, only——'

'Only I am here,' replied Mr. Lynn, with a slight inclination of the head, and a shade of sarcasm in his voice. 'But Miss Burton need be under no apprehension; when my services can be dispensed with I am ready to leave the house, and so spare her the pain of my society.'

Something almost like a moan came from Agatha's lips. She had been standing up, but she sat down, and turned her face to the window, without speaking. There was something like triumph mingled with the bitterness that lay at Mr. Lynn's heart, as he looked at Agatha; but he felt that he had never loved her so madly as he did then, in her proud desperation; not that he showed it, there was a fiend at his heart, and it goaded him on to torture her.

'If you have any message for Mrs. Vernor, and can trust me with it, I will promise to deliver it.'

'I shall see Mrs. Vernor myself, I hope,' replied Agatha; 'I have nothing new to tell her.'

'Miss Burton's life cannot be so uneventful,' he said, 'or perhaps her usual discretion prevents her from troubling her friends with her personal interests.'

The hot tears came into Agatha's eyes at the implied reproach; but she was in the shade, and Mr. Lynn did not see her face, he only saw the diamond ring that glittered on her finger. He waited a minute, and then he bowed and was about to leave the room. He had even reached the door when Agatha interrupted him. There was a wild, hunted look in her large dark eyes, as she exclaimed,

'Mr. Lynn, don't go; I ask it as a favour, please don't go.' She went back to her seat. It had all been done on the impulse of the moment, something had impelled her to it.

Mr. Lynn closed the door, came in and sat down.

'Miss Burton, I do it because you ask me; nothing now but your words shall influence me.' He was cruel even yet, but Agatha did not remonstrate. She looked up, and the pained expression on her face soothed his angry spirit, and he asked gently about her mother, brother, and her London life.

'I have one more favour to ask to-day,' replied Agatha, 'and it is that you will talk to me of St. Helens, and only St. Helens. Let me try to imagine, for to-day at least, that there has been no intervening time, that the old days have come back again.'

'It will be difficult for me, Miss Burton,' said Mr. Lynn; 'but I will try.' And so Mr. Lynn began by speaking of Mrs. Vernor, and why she had left home, and the reason of his accompanying her, his mother being anxious that she should not travel alone in her agitated frame of mind. And then, insensibly, they glided into other subjects, so that when the servant opened the door and announced the carriage, both fancied that it had only been away a few minutes.

Mr. Lynn offered Agatha his arm. She was brighter now, something like undefined hope had sprung up within her; but not so with him.

'Miss Burton, Agatha,' he said, as he grasped her hand, 'once more—good-bye.'

'Not good-bye,' she said; 'I am coming again to-morrow to see Mrs. Vernor.' She got into the carriage, the door was shut, she looked out of the window into the gathering darkness; he was watching her, and she saw him still standing until the carriage turned the corner of the square.

Mrs. Burton had not come back after all, so no disagreeable questions were asked. Agatha had not felt so happy as she did that night for what seemed to her whole ages, and she dropped asleep saying to herself, 'To-morrow I shall see him—to-morrow, to-morrow.' Alas! for the human to-morrow!

CHAPTER VI.

The next day, when Agatha got up, her whole mind was engrossed with one idea, and that was—Mr. Lynn. She waited impatiently until breakfast was over, and then asked Mrs. Burton if she might order the carriage for eleven o'clock. Mrs. Burton acquiesced, provided she would be ready to return at two, reminding her that in a few days

Lord Dunmore would be in London, and that it would be well for her to have finished all her business, so as to be at liberty.

Liberty! how the word grated upon Agatha's ear. 'But for to-day at least,' she said, as she went upstairs, 'I will *forget him*; for to-day I will be the old Agatha.' Then she took off her diamond ring, and all the ornaments which had been gifts from Lord Dunmore, and put on the dress she knew Mr. Lynn would like, remembering all his tastes, even to the colour of her gloves. She did not analyze her motives, she only followed her inclinations; and then she hurried down stairs, sprang into the carriage, and looking up at the drawing-room window, nodded gaily to Mrs. Burton as she drove off.

The drive to Bayswater seemed interminable; but she was there at last, and going up the stairs she had gone down the day before, leaning on Mr. Lynn's arm. Mrs. Vernor was in the sitting-room; she put her arms round Agatha, kissed her as she took off her bonnet, and made her sit down. Then she began a hundred questions, which Agatha hardly knew how to answer, for all the while she was listening for Mr. Lynn's footstep. She was not prepared for disappointment, but waited and hoped on, and tried to appear interested in other subjects. At last, when nearly an hour had passed away, she could bear it no longer.

'Mr. Lynn?' she said.

'Mr. Lynn went home this morning.'

'Gone, really gone!' exclaimed Agatha, forgetful of everything but her bitter mortification. 'Tell me you did not mean it; it can't be true.' And she laid her hand imploringly on Mrs. Vernor's arm.

'Yes, Agatha, it is quite true.'

'And he left no message for me. Oh! he *has* been unkind.'

'He did leave a message, Agatha,' said Mrs. Vernor, quietly taking both Agatha's hands in hers. 'He told me, if you asked, to say that he went away because it was best.'

Agatha burst into tears, she could not help it; the reaction was too great. Mrs. Vernor tried to soothe her.

'Agatha,' she said, 'you are not happy; tell me what I can do for you; you have always been like a child to me.'

'You can do nothing,' replied Agatha, looking up, and dashing the tears from her eyes. 'Mine is a miserable lot, but I have brought it on myself, and I must abide by it.'

'Agatha,' said Mrs. Vernor, 'tell me one thing—did you love Mr. Lynn?'

'Don't ask me,' said Agatha, starting up; 'it is too late now; I am to be Lord Dunmore's wife in three weeks—what is Mr. Lynn to me?'

'The sorrows, Agatha, that are of our own making *will* bring their consequent suffering. There is no position in life from which we are not bound to save ourselves should it be yet in our power, if that position be one which we know is wrong; and you are wrong, Agatha, if you do not love Lord Dunmore.'

'Dear Mrs. Vernor,' said Agatha, laying her head upon her friend's shoulder, 'I have been a miserable coward, but I have stood so alone, and now I feel that there is no escape; all I ask is, do not speak of it.'

Mrs. Vernor had stood up, and was about to remonstrate, but Mrs. Burton was unexpectedly announced, and saying anything more became impossible. She had come sooner than she intended, to take her darling Agatha away, and to indulge herself at the same time, she said, with a peep at Mrs. Vernor: she wished to hear her opinion on Agatha's looks, and thank her in person for all the care she had taken of her dear child at St. Helens.

Mrs. Burton could be very gracious when she liked, especially to those whom she considered her inferiors, when it did not compromise her in the eyes of the fashionable world; and Mrs. Burton had also a theory that, sooner or later, nearly every one can be made useful in some way. So she was most sympathising about Mrs. Vernor's consumptive pupil, and her hurried visit to town; begged her to dine with them, and even offered to send the carriage to fetch her.

Mrs. Vernor was leaving town the

next morning, so she refused, and Mrs. Burton and Agatha took their leave. As Agatha kissed her friend, Mrs. Vernor managed to whisper, in answer to her clinging embrace,

'If ever, Agatha, you want a home, promise me you will come to St. Helens.' And those words came back to Agatha when most she needed the assurance.

Mrs. Vernor left London the following day, and Agatha returned to her old life. Her trousseau progressed rapidly, and everything neared its fulfilment.

Three nights before the wedding, Agatha was seated alone before her own fire. She had but just parted from her mother, as each had gone to her own room, and they had been all the evening talking of dress and jewels, and arranging future plans. Agatha was weary and heart-sick. 'Better,' she said, 'be dead than so utterly wretched. Oh! mother, what is my happiness to you?' And then the thought flashed into her mind, 'Perhaps I am wronging her—it is not yet too late for that.' She started up, put on her dressing-gown, and went swiftly down the passage until she reached her mother's room, knocked softly, and entered.

Mrs. Burton was sitting in an easy chair over the fire, reading one of a packet of letters. She looked surprised at Agatha's entrance, as if it were an unusual event at that hour.

'You are surprised to see me,' said Agatha; 'but, mother, I have something to say, something I want your advice about. You will think it is late perhaps,' she continued, with all the calmness of desperation; 'but—'

'But I think I can guess,' said Mrs. Burton, smiling; 'you want the white lace flounces for your amber silk.'

Agatha shook her head; her mother's total unsuspectingness made her task very difficult. She waited for a moment, then she knelt on the ground, low down at her mother's feet, and told her that she could not marry Lord Dunmore.

Mrs. Burton's face grew livid as she listened.

'Agatha, what madness is this? Not marry Lord Dunmore? be dis-

graced yourself, and disgrace us all for life?"

'But, mother,' said Agatha, 'think of my happiness. Oh, mother! only let me give it up, and I will work for you, I will never leave you: we will be so happy, in spite of all the lost hateful grandeur, which can only make me miserable. Mother, if you ever loved me, save me!'

Mrs. Burton looked staggered, but she rallied.

'Agatha, you can't mean it: think of the expense I have been at, the ruinous outlay on your London season, your dress, everything—everything which was to be put straight by your marriage with Lord Dunmore.'

'Think, mother,' said Agatha, with the passionate, pleading look still in her eyes, 'how young I am to sacrifice a whole life; think what I shall suffer if I am obliged to live for ever with a man I—I hate.'

'You will get to like him, Agatha.'

'Never!' she replied. 'I might try to do my duty, but I should fail even there, because——'

'Because,' exclaimed Mrs. Burton, 'it is as I suspected; you have some romantic schoolgirl fancy for some one else. I only wish,' she said, with rising indignation, 'I had never let you go to St. Helens, and then you would not have fallen, as you did, into the hands of low, designing people.'

Agatha started up—her eyes were flaming.

'I will not hear it,' she said, 'even from you. All the real happiness I have ever known was at St. Helens; all the rest of my life, since I grew up, has been a vain, miserable delusion; it has made me a false, deceitful woman, deceiving even the man I am going to marry, and who believes in me: it is my duty at least to tell him.'

Mrs. Burton was really alarmed; her terror lest Agatha should fulfil her threat made her grow cold all over. She saw in one glance Lady Dunmore's triumph, Lady Alice Wendover's, herself sunk in the shade, Valentine's heiress lost: so she begged and prayed, she even wept, she appealed to her love, to her duty; she implored her to think

of the disgrace, and at last Agatha promised, and Mrs. Burton, still fearful, went with her back to her room, saw her into bed, and sat by her until Agatha had, or Mrs. Burton thought she had, sunk into a calm sleep.

'To-morrow,' said Mrs. Burton, 'Lord Dunmore and Valentine come; I must prevent her doing anything rash to-morrow, and the day after she is to be married.'

The next morning Agatha seemed much as usual, only she looked ill. Lord Dunmore and Valentine arrived in the afternoon, and they all went out driving. Mrs. Burton tried, by an extra amount of conversation and gaiety, to cover Agatha's silence, and she laughed pleasantly when Lord Dunmore showed some anxiety about her, and assured him it was only excitement.

After dinner, when the gentlemen joined the ladies, Lord Dunmore took a vacant chair beside Agatha, and Mrs. Burton felt a sickening dread lest, in the opportunity given by a *tête-à-tête*, Agatha might betray herself; but it was needless. Agatha felt utterly hopeless and miserable, but she did not expect to be anything else. She looked at Lord Dunmore, as he bent his head over her, and shuddered as she thought, 'To-morrow he will be my husband.'

Lord Dunmore was in great spirits: he talked of what he should do, of what Agatha was to do; and then he took from his waistcoat-pocket a small ring-case and displayed a plain gold hoop, and made her fit it on, and then raised her hand to his lips, his small light eyes gleaming with triumph as he paid her some whispered compliment.

Agatha withdrew her hand and glanced at the ring, emblem of love and truth and eternity; and she felt as if she must fling it away, and go away herself, anywhere, so that it was away—away from him. But with all this at her heart, she sat on and submitted, and Mrs. Burton sat on and watched; but it was over at last, and Agatha was alone in her own room.

She stood for some time gazing down into the glowing embers, a

little foot resting on the polished fender, trying to feel at least that perhaps, after all, her choice for the future had been for the best, that it had been out of her power to avert it, and that it was her fate.

We are all, more or less, what circumstances make us; and Agatha's powers of reasoning had never been developed beyond the atmosphere by which she had been surrounded during the last three years of her life. When Agatha, at the age of sixteen, had left Mrs. Vernor's care to enjoy the advantages of continental masters, she was just at that period of life when the character is forming, when it is most susceptible of external influences, most easily moulded for good or evil; and Mrs. Burton's maternal precepts all tended to utter worldliness, so that Agatha grew into womanhood with her judgment warped by social prejudices, with her real warmth of disposition and generous impulses pruned to the conventional standard, her ambition and vanity fostered until the false and the real had become so entangled that it seemed impossible but that, year by year, all the good would be utterly crushed out, and only what was false and heartless remain.

But there was one thing which had saved Agatha, and that was her love for Mr. Lynn. All that was good and beautiful seemed to her to come into her existence through and by him.

There is no woman born who would not be ennobled, exalted, purified by the knowledge that a good man loves her. Years may come and go, changes take place, but the fact remains, the unalterable fact, that the one master hand has struck the hitherto untouched chords, and the vibration never dies.

Agatha had nerved herself for a conflict which she was not armed to carry on; there was wild rebellion in her heart, and she could not subdue it. The coals assumed fantastic shapes, and her thoughts went wearily over the old ground and the old arguments, but it would not do. She went to the door, locked it, and then taking a small cedar-wood box from her wardrobe,

sat down before the dressing-table, and began slowly taking out its contents.

To any looker-on they would not have seemed of much interest: two or three little notes, some dried grass and flowers, some seaweed, a scrap of cornelian—but each had a remembrance which, after to-night, she must put away for ever.

Agatha impatiently shook away the tears that welled up unbidden into her eyes, but as she did so her glance rested on the shining folds of white satin and lace;—it was her bridal dress. 'To-morrow,' she said, bitterly, 'I shall be a peeress—surely that should satisfy me;' but her voice, as she whispered the words, sounded hollow and unreal, and died into a moan, whilst Mr. Lynn's name hovered on her lips. She still wore her evening dress, and some bracelets and other ornaments which were the gifts of Lord Dunmore. She suddenly tore them off and flung them down as if they had stung her; she longed to crush them beneath her feet, to hide them from her sight—anything but to see them glittering on her neck and arms.

She knelt down and buried her face in her hands; her long dark hair fell in heavy masses over her white shoulders, and no statue of despair could ever have typified more abandoned grief.

Nearly an hour passed away; then she started up, pushed the hair back from her face and glanced at the clock; the long, delicate hands pointed to the hour of midnight. Agatha's breath came in short panting gasps; before that hand could once more return to the same spot on the enamelled dial, her doom would be irrevocably sealed.

A sudden desperate resolution flashed across her mind: it was, since none would save her, to save herself. She paced up and down the room after the thought had presented itself, and tried to concentrate her resolution. Agatha was brave by nature, and every feeling in her heart urged her to the step; but she wavered long ere her decision became final, and then she went to

the table, and, with the calmness of desperation, drew out her desk and wrote, first to Lord Dunmore, and then to her mother.

Lord Dunmore's letter was very short; she blamed no one but herself, and told him that, for both their sakes, it was better she should tell him then, though it were even at the eleventh hour, that her heart had never been his, rather than that, in after years, he should find out that she had deceived him. 'I can ask you to try and forgive me now,' she said—'then I could not.'

To her mother she wrote:

'I have tried hard to carry out my promise, but I have failed. I dare not kneel by Lord Dunmore's side, to-morrow, and vow to him love, honour, and obedience—I would rather die. You need not be anxious about me: I am going to St. Helens, and if you have ever loved me, you will forgive your unhappy

'AGATHA.'

When these were written, she locked the desk, first taking from it a packet of Lord Dunmore's letters; then she went to the dressing-table and collected her jewels, and, putting them carefully into their cases, made up the whole into a parcel directed to Lord Dunmore. She then selected from her wardrobe a dark winter dress, and taking off her evening attire, put it on, arranged different things about the room, moving noiselessly, but with the same air of determination on her face that had come over her on first realizing the possibility of escape; and thus the night passed.

Agatha did not even lie down, but sat waiting, as prisoners wait, for the verdict of life or death. At a quarter before five o'clock she put on a long cloak, a straw bonnet, and tied over her face, so as entirely to conceal it, a thick black veil. When this was done she took her letter to Lord Dunmore, for she thought if she left it to her mother it might never reach him; then she crept down stairs and softly unfastened the hall-door.

The bitter east wind swept past her, and flakes of snow were driven in her face, but she heeded them not;

she closed the door behind her, and went out alone into the street.

It was so new and strange a position for Agatha to find herself alone in the streets of London, and at so early an hour, that at first she paused involuntarily, as if uncertain whether to go back or not, but her hesitation did not last; she drew her cloak tightly round her, and went hurriedly on. The cold was so intense that her trembling feet almost refused to carry her, and the snow was so thick that she could hardly see her way.

She went through the Marble Arch out into the broad thoroughfare: it was as dark as night, and the few passers-by heeded her not. She waited for a cab, hoping that one might pass, and fortune at last befriended her; she had hardly sufficient voice left to call to the driver, but, luckily, he was passing by slowly, and came close to her. She got in, and ordered the man to drive to the Euston station. Although it did not take more than half an hour to reach her destination, it seemed to Agatha that she would never be there, the time passed so slowly. She paid the cabman his fare, and went straight to the ticket-office, took her ticket, and passed on to the platform. Her first act was to post Lord Dunmore's letter, and then she sat down and waited for the train. It came at last, and she got in; it moved slowly off, and all was over. Agatha sat in the farthest corner of the carriage, and did not speak, but watched the breaking of the grey winter morning—her bridal morning; she saw the sun rise and gleam over the fields white with their mantle of snow, and she felt that, come what might, she was saved.

It was late in the evening when she arrived at Denborough; the station was a little way out of the town, but she did not dare to take a fly, she was so afraid of being recognized. She drew her veil more closely over her face, and walked away all alone in the direction of St. Helens, only fearful of meeting any one she knew. She had eaten nothing since the day before, but the excitement kept her up, and at

last she reached the cottage and was asking for Mrs. Vernor.

The servant was new and did not, therefore, recognize her, so she was asked to wait in the hall while she went to inform her mistress; but Agatha did not heed her—the door of Mrs. Vernor's room opened, and, unannounced, Agatha went in. Mrs. Vernor started up—Agatha took off her veil.

'You need not be afraid, it is my living self,' she said. 'I have come to you, for I had nowhere else to go, and you asked me, and, oh! I have been so miserable.' But even whilst she was speaking, her voice failed, and she sank insensible at Mrs. Vernor's feet.

CHAPTER VII.

When Mr. Lynn returned to Denborough from London, he had made up his mind to banish every remembrance of Agatha Burton; but however willing we may be, the schooling may be difficult; to him it was impossible.

When women suffer, they seek rest—men action. Mr. Lynn devoted himself to his profession: he tried to live his misery down—to crush every thought of his past hopes out of his mind; he tried to think hardly of Agatha, but down in the depths of his heart he loved her still so dearly, that the thought of her as the wife of another was gall and wormwood to him.

Sometimes he upbraided himself with having been harsh to her, at others he reproached her as a heartless coquette who had trifled with, and humiliated him; and yet she was the only woman he had ever loved. He could not help thinking of her; he could not help dreading to see her marriage announced in the papers.

'Agatha's wedding-day,' he said, as he went to his office. The sun was shining so brightly, the crisp snow glistened on the housetops, the holly decorated the windows, and the little boys shouted in the streets. He almost expected to hear the bells ring out a bridal peal from the tower of the old Denborough church.

Even in his office he could not banish the thought. He sat down determinedly, he gave out the work to his clerk, and occupied himself in writing, and in whatever business was most irksome, and which he felt least inclined to undertake. But Agatha's name seemed written on every page, it floated before him in the air, and he almost fancied he heard the 'I will,' that was to make her the bride of Lord Dunmore.

He started up; he could bear it no longer; he wrote a line which he sent up to the Red House, saying to his mother that he was going out into the country, and would not be home until late, so that she need not sit up for him. After despatching the letter, he put away all his books and papers, and went out of the town, down to the sea, over the hills. He walked quickly for hours, walked until he was so tired that he was obliged to sit down, and regardless of the cold, regardless of everything, he whiled away the daylight.

It was nearly midnight when he got back into the High Street, and he was surprised at seeing his mother stand before him in answer to his knock at the door of the Red House. He stooped to kiss her, and tried to say something cheerful, remonstrating with her for sitting up for him. Mr. Lynn had a chivalrous regard for, and belief in all women, and a peculiar reverence for his mother.

She looked at him with a soft loving radiance in her face, and pointed to the flakes of snow that almost whitened his coat. His smile in answer to the mute appeal was almost as wintry as the night outside, but he took off his outer wraps and followed her into his father's study, where a cheerful fire was blazing.

By the strong light Mr. Lynn looked even more tired and weary than he had done on first entering the house, if such a thing were possible. It seemed that years had been added to his looks in that one day, years of suffering such as only few are called to suffer, suffering that nothing can efface.

He had never told his mother that he loved Agatha Burton; he never dreamt that she had known it long

ago. Could he have had a secret grief and kept it from her? Was she not his mother? She stooped down and laid her trembling hand lovingly among the bright curling locks on his temple.

'John,' she said, 'I have something to tell you, something I wished you to hear from myself, and that is why I have waited for you to-night.'

He looked up, and in answer to the look, she began gently,

'Agatha——'

He started.

'No, mother, not to-night, I cannot bear it, not even her name. I have spent all the day burying my dead; let me forget her or mourn for her as for one who henceforth is nothing to me.'

The tears started into Mrs. Lynn's eyes.

'May God forgive her for the suffering she has caused you, but I must tell you something about her. Let me say it, John, and after that, if you wish it, I will never mention her name again. Agatha is at St. Helens.'

Mr. Lynn looked bewildered.

'Agatha at St. Helens,' he repeated, slowly; 'this is Agatha's wedding day, and she is——'

'She is *not* married to Lord Dunmore.'

'Mother,' said Mr. Lynn, 'don't deceive me. Am I dreaming? Is this real, or some wild phantasy of my brain? Tell me why it is—something to make it sound like truth.'

'I have not seen Agatha,' said Mrs. Lynn, 'but your father was sent for to-night by Mrs. Vernor to see Agatha Burton, who had come to her in order to escape her marriage, and Agatha was ill. I know nothing more at present, but I believe it is only over-excitement and fatigue that have knocked her up.'

A wild hope rushed to Mr. Lynn's mind. Agatha might yet be his. After the long hours of darkness, the sudden light bursting from the cloud overwhelmed him. He sat down and buried his face in both his hands, and his mother saw by the deep heavings of his breast how much he suffered. She once more laid her hand upon his head, something like a whispered blessing came from her

lips, and then gently kissing him, she left the room and closed the door behind her. Better, she thought, that the deep emotions of a man's heart should be sacred even from his mother's eye.

Mr. Lynn remained in the same attitude nearly an hour; then he got up, and left the room. A sudden impulse had seized him; it was to go to St. Helens just to see the light burning in Agatha's room. He could not realize it without doing so.

He took the key with him this time, and walked rapidly down the hill in the direction of the bay. It was not snowing now, myriads of stars had come out, and the clear sharp frost had covered every blade of grass with shining crystals. The sea seemed almost like a summer sea, it was so calm, save for the white ridges on the sand-banks that stretched away far as the eye could reach. Mr. Lynn stood before the cottage, leaning on the palings. Yes, there was the lamp in Agatha's window, burning brightly and steadily: it shone out like a beacon of hope. Agatha was really there—Agatha whom, a few hours ago, he had looked upon as lost to him for ever. Agatha, who might yet be his. What was the cold December air to him? Giant despair no longer held him down; he could defy the world, and with renewed energy fight the battle of life.

Mrs. Lynn lay awake for hours that night, listening for her son's footstep on the stair, and at last it came. Not a worn, tired step, but a firm, hopeful tread, and with a sigh of thankfulness she abandoned her night watch and went to sleep.

When Agatha partially recovered consciousness, Dr. Lynn was bending over her, and anxiously watching the effect of the restoratives he was employing. She, however, did not appear to recognize her old friend, but sank into a long deep sleep. Mrs. Vernor remained by her bedside during the night, and only left her when the bright sunlight had ushered in another day, obliging her to draw the window curtains more closely, for fear that Agatha's rest might be disturbed. When Agatha did wake she was almost frightened

to find herself lying on the little bed in the little room that she knew so well, looking out on the sea, no longer blue and sparkling, but with angry leaden waves foaming on the sandy ridges, white with the driven snow.

Mrs. Vernor was standing by her, and gazing at her with such a look of anxious inquiry that Agatha was recalled from a momentary forgetfulness to a realization of all her unhappiness; and then she started up.

'I do not remember,' she said. 'Tell me why I am here. Is this my wedding day? Oh! if you love me, do not let me marry Lord Dunmore.'

Mrs. Vernor soothed her as a mother, but as Agatha's mother had never done in all her remembrance.

'You are not going to be married, Agatha, and you are safe with me at your old home.'

'Ah! is it really St. Helens? I thought I was only dreaming.'

'You are weak and ill, Agatha. Don't talk of anything now, but try to get stronger, and then we will see all about making you quite happy.'

'Dear Mrs. Vernor, you will not tell any one that I am here, you will not let me see any one. I could not bear it, at least not yet.'

Mrs. Vernor promised, and then Agatha fell asleep again. Dr. Lynn looked in to see her very often, but Agatha did not know it. 'All that she wants,' he said, 'is rest; she is worn out both in mind and body.' And so she was, and the consequent prostration was so great that Mrs. Vernor felt tempted to break her promise and to write to Mrs. Burton. But after a week's careful nursing Agatha rallied.

It was not until she was much stronger that Mrs. Vernor allowed her to relate all the harassing circumstances connected with her flight from home. She was Agatha's nurse, companion, friend; she almost seemed to anticipate her very wishes; she cooled her aching head, read to her, or arranged on a little table by her bedside certain bouquets of mysterious flowers that came, Agatha never asked from whom, although perhaps she guessed, for she seemed

to prize them more than anything else.

One day, after Agatha had been consulting Mrs. Vernor as to whether she ought to return home, and wondering why her mother had not even written, Mrs. Vernor decided on giving her a letter which had really reached St. Helens some days before, but which she did not think it prudent for her to read whilst her cheeks were so pale, her eyes so heavy, and her prostration so great. Agatha opened it with trembling hands, and read the following words:—

'That any daughter of mine could disgrace herself in the shameless manner you have done, Agatha, I can even now hardly realize. You have not only disgraced yourself, but you have broken a mother's heart, ruined your brother's prospects for life, and are no longer a child of mine. What inducements you may have had to outrage all propriety in the way you have done, I cannot know, but can only imagine that some low connection has been the secret mainspring of your unlady-like conduct. I weep as I write to think what your romance and folly has caused us all to suffer. Lord Dunmore is, I hear, distracted, and has sent for his mother, who will no doubt congratulate herself on the escape her son has had. I am too ill to write more, and my doctor imperatively forbids my exciting myself, so I can only add that you will regret the step you have taken but once, and that will be for the rest of your life.'

The effect of this letter on Agatha was anything but cheering; still she struggled against any display of her feelings before Mrs. Vernor, and it was only when alone that she allowed her mind to dwell on the past. The future she dared not trust, as everything hitherto seemed to have turned to ashes in her grasp, or, more strictly speaking, she had thrown away what really could have made her happy, or, like so many others, discovered her mistake too late.

Still Agatha got better. She had not, as yet, left her room, or seen any one; but the day before Christ-

mas-eve, Mrs. Vernor persuaded her to come down stairs, if only for an hour. Agatha was looking more like her natural self, except that she was thinner, and the colour had faded from her cheeks, leaving them of a marble paleness.

Mrs. Vernor drew an arm-chair to the fire, and wrapped a red cloak round the shoulders of her patient.

Agatha smiled. 'You are taking such care of me,' she said.

'I want you to be quite well and happy,' replied Mrs. Vernor, smiling.

Agatha sighed. 'I dare say I may get well; but I don't suppose I shall ever be very happy.'

'Time works wonders, that nothing else can; we shall see what you say about that a few years hence.'

'At all events,' said Agatha, smiling, with something of her old brightness, 'I am not destined to be a blessing to others: think what a slave I have made even of you since I came to St. Helens.'

'But I don't mean to be kept in quarantine any longer. I want to go out this afternoon: do you mind being alone for an hour?'

'I like being alone,' said Agatha; 'it suits me.'

Mrs. Vernor shook her head, placed some books on a table beside her chair, and went away. Agatha took up one of the books and began to read. How long she had been so engaged she did not know, for her mind had wandered away from the pages, and she was wondering when her mother would write again, in answer to several letters she had sent to her and her brother, entreating their forgiveness, when the door opened, and some one came in. The afternoon had grown dark so rapidly, that now she could only see by the fitful firelight; but she looked up, expecting that it was Mrs. Vernor, when, for the second time in her life, she encountered instead Mr. Lynn. She started up and would have made her escape; but it was impossible—Mr. Lynn was between her and the door; she remained standing, the scarlet cloak draped about her shoulders, her dark hair hanging in negligent

masses from the comb that had partly fallen out, a flushing colour in her cheeks, and the wild hunted look in her eyes.

Mr. Lynn had always thought her beautiful, but never so beautiful as she looked at that moment. He was almost afraid to speak, lest he should break the charm, and find it was but a dream; but, outwardly at least, he was the calmer of the two, as he advanced, held out his hand, and making some commonplace inquiry about her health, insisted on her resuming her place in the arm-chair. For a moment she remained standing, and then she yielded; for there was something about Mr. Lynn that enforced obedience; and it was this power of will that had so much charm for Agatha, for she was a true woman in her heart of hearts.

The first few minutes passed almost in silence. Mr. Lynn leaned against the mantelpiece, looking intently at Agatha, as if trying to read the expression of her face as it was seen by the half-light; but presently he came and stood in front of her. She looked up, and met his downward glance, beneath which her eyes fell.

'Miss Burton,' he said, 'I have no right perhaps to ask the question, but I leave it to your generosity to answer it; why did you not marry Lord Dunmore?'

Agatha did not look up this time, but she answered firmly, although her voice was so low that none but those who were standing close by could have heard it—

'Because I did not love him.'

Mr. Lynn walked to the window, and then he came back.

'Miss Burton—Agatha!' he said, desperately, 'one more question and I have done. Did you—do you love any one else?'

No answer came: a stillness like death reigned in the room. Agatha's face was turned away, but her clasped hands were trembling. Mr. Lynn took them in his own.

'Agatha,' he said, 'you can never know what you have been to me. God grant you never may. I have tried, so long as you were not near me, to forget you in a life of duties;

and I might have succeeded; but I cannot live near you, breathe the same air as you breathe, and be nothing to you.'

Still Agatha did not speak. Mr. Lynn let go her hand, and leant his arm upon the mantelpiece. His voice was tremulous as he continued—

'I have never dared to hope that you could love me; I knew that it was the wildest dream to think so. I shall throw it from me after to-night, and make arrangements to go to some part of the world where we can never meet again; but I am still selfish; I could not bear that you should hate me.'

Agatha got up and stood by him.

'Have I done you so much harm,' she said, 'that I should add to it by sending you from your home—from all you ever cared for? Do you think it possible I could hate you when——'

'Agatha! is it possible? Do you love me?'

'I have never loved any one else,' she said; and the words fell faint and soft on his eager listening ears.

When Mrs. Vernor looked in an hour after, Mr. Lynn and Agatha were still sitting over the darkening embers of the forgotten fire—forgotten, like everything else, in the first dawn of their earthly paradise. She closed the door softly, knowing that she had not been heard, and went upstairs with something like a sigh, mingled with feelings of genuine satisfaction.

CHAPTER VIII.

Agatha was very happy.

It is hardly possible to define happiness. It is not so much the existence of the light which is without, as the light which is reflected from within—the light which gilds and glorifies even the commonest objects, the dreariest places, with a fancied beauty which is not their own, but coloured by the mind.

Everything seemed bright to Agatha—the present, the future, all—everything. It was nothing uncertain or wavering now; but something actual and positive. Mr. Lynn loved her; and all that was

good and beautiful came to her through him.

When Agatha went down-stairs the next morning, Mrs. Vernor smiled and told her that she was looking so well that she hardly knew her, and that she should certainly put her off the invalid list; and Agatha said, if she were not emancipated, she would emancipate herself; and as a proof of it she had promised to spend the Christmas-eve at the Lynns.

'But you must not,' said Agatha, blushing, 'tell Mrs. Lynn before to-night of our engagement: Mr. Lynn wishes it to be a surprise.' Of course Mrs. Vernor promised the utmost discretion.

Mr. Lynn came during the day; but he refused Mrs. Vernor's invitation to remain and go back with them to Denborough in the evening. Agatha looked disappointed; and in answer to the look he went and sat down by her.

'Agatha,' he said, 'I must not forget, and you must not try to make me forget, that I must *work*. I have an incentive now that I never had before, and I shall glory in the drudgery even of my profession; it will no longer be a self-imposed duty to escape if possible from myself, but a labour of love.'

'You will not think me a burden?' she said, softly.

For a moment Mr. Lynn looked vexed, then he replied,

'Yes, Agatha, till you are mine—till we are married. Unity is strength,' he continued; 'I am a mere crumbling wall now; I want to transplant my ivy, and take it home.'

'Will you not wait till the spring?' she said.

Mr. Lynn shook his head. 'Agatha, think how I have waited and suffered.'

Agatha smiled. 'May I not claim any of the suffering?'

'Then, Agatha, you will consent?'

'I am yours,' she said; 'you may do with me what you will.'

When Agatha went upstairs to dress for the evening, she wavered in her selection of a toilette. Fortunately Cameron had forwarded a box of clothes to her; but she turned

away from all the coloured dresses, remembering that Mr. Lynn preferred either black or white, and finally selected a black silk, made so as to partly display the throat and neck, and trimmed with soft and delicate lace. In her hair she put some crimson berries, and then she went again, as she had done once before, into Mrs. Vernor's room, to ask her approval.

If Mrs. Vernor had admired Agatha then, she admired her a hundred times more now. Her beauty seemed to have deepened and matured, and there was a soft love-light in her eyes that had replaced the expression which before had been almost cold and indifferent.

'I was afraid we were late,' said Agatha. Mrs. Vernor smiled, but hurried down stairs, and they got at once into the fly which was to take them to the High Street. At the door of the Red House, Mr. Lynn was waiting for them. The other expected guests had not yet arrived, for Mrs. Vernor and Agatha had come early on purpose. Mrs. Vernor went in first; and for a moment Agatha and Mr. Lynn lingered in the hall.

'Perhaps,' said Agatha, 'they will not think me good enough.' She had never thought of this with Lord Dunmore; but real love gives a humility, a distrust that nothing else can. Mr. Lynn looked at Agatha reproachfully.

'You are only too good,' he said; and he took her trembling hand, laid it on his arm, and drew her into the room. It was the drawing-room that night—the drawing-room decked with holly and evergreens, the chandelier uncovered and lit with wax candles, and a blazing fire in the grate, before which Dr. Lynn and his wife were standing. Mr. Lynn led Agatha straight up to his mother.

'Mother,' he said, putting Agatha's hand in hers, 'this is my Christmas gift; Miss Burton has promised to be my wife.'

And so Agatha was taken to the hearts and to the home of the old doctor and his wife in the High Street of Denborough.

The marriage took place in London, early in the year. Neither Agatha's mother nor brother were present. Mrs. Burton wrote from Paris that she would forgive Agatha and send her all her things, but that she must not expect her to make any more sacrifices; that, as it was, she should for some years be obliged to practise the most rigid self-denial. She hoped Agatha might be happy, but could never understand, with her advantages of birth and education, from whom she could have inherited her very low tastes; and that, as she had chosen to put herself under Mrs. Vernor's protection, she hoped Mrs. Vernor would go to town with her, and try to have the wedding as little talked about as possible.

Captain Burton never even wrote: but although the estrangement from her family pained Agatha, her love for Mr. Lynn prevented her ever feeling a shadow of regret for the step she had taken.

It was on a bright morning late in July that Agatha and Mr. Lynn were sitting together over the breakfast table in their little cottage in the outskirts of Denborough, about ten minutes' walk from the High Street. There was a garden in front, where the flowers were carefully tended by a loving woman's hand.

Agatha was dressed in a plain fresh muslin, and looked so bright that the very sunshine from without seemed but an echo of the gladness of her heart.

Mr. Lynn was reading the paper. He looked up rather suddenly at Agatha, who was busily employed in pouring out his tea; and after a moment's hesitation got up, and bringing the 'Times' in his hand, gave it to her; and pointing to a paragraph, Agatha's eye fell on the following 'fashionable intelligence'—'We understand, from authentic sources, that early in the ensuing year Lord Dunmore is about to lead to the hymeneal altar Lady Alice Wendover, fourth daughter of the Earl of Carstairs.'

When Agatha looked up, Mr. Lynn was gazing at her with something of the old mournful expres-

sion in his eyes that had so haunted her at Brighton.

'Agatha,' he said, and his voice was a little unsteady, 'you do not repent?'

She threw down the paper, and went to him.

'Do you think,' she said, putting her hand upon his shoulder, 'that I do not love you?—do you think that if you were a thousand earls I could love you better than I do?'

Mr. Lynn stooped to kiss the lovely face that looked up to his with such infinite trust.

'Ah, Agatha,' he replied, drawing her more closely to him, 'how was it that I ever believed it possible that I could live without you?'

Something like tears came into Agatha's flashing eyes.

'There,' she said, 'we were different; I knew I could not live without you—it was not possible.'

'But you might change, Agatha, when you come to reflect in future years upon what you are, and what you might have been.'

Agatha shook her head, and then, laying it softly on his shoulder, she said—

'I will grow round him in his place,
Grow, live, die, looking on his face,
Die, dying clasped in his embrace.'

And she fulfilled her prophecy.

As years went on, Dr. Lynn died, and they went to live in the Red House in the High Street; and little children's feet sounded on the formal gravel walks, and little voices laughed merrily in the old house, and Agatha and Mr. Lynn, in their unity

and love, knew no sorrow such as Agatha might have known had she fulfilled the brilliant destiny which her mother has never ceased to regret.

Her brother, Captain Valentine Burton, succeeded in marrying Miss Chatterton, who was really attached to him, and who was destined for her future life to be as unhappy as those wives must be who, finding they have been married only for their money, still cling to their ruined god, in spite of coldness and neglect. Alas! for the slavery of those who love unwisely. Captain Burton and his wife never visit Denborough: he is a rising man, and considering that Agatha has disgraced him, he wishes her to feel his displeasure, and acts accordingly.

The movements of Lord and Lady Dunmore appear at stated intervals among the fashionable intelligence; but Agatha never met her patrician lover again; their walk in life was no longer the same; not but that Agatha's beauty and talents might have commanded for her a far higher class of society than that which they had in Denborough, but Agatha resolutely refused to avail herself of any advantage of the kind.

'My new world,' she would say, 'is too happy to risk losing it by grasping again the false pleasures of the old.'

And she still thinks there is no position in the world so honourable, or so much to be envied, as that of Mr. Lynn's wife.

C. M. L.

UP AND DOWN THE LONDON STREETS.

BY MARK LEMON.

CHAPTER VIII.

STRAND CROSS, COVENT GARDEN, ETC. LONDON, 1847.

AT the village of Charing was formerly a hermitage. A hermit of Charing Cross would now have abundant opportunity of meditating on the vanities of mankind, and the electric time-ball might call him to his dish of herbs and cold water, unless he preferred lunch among the ladies at Farrance's. Charing Cross was erected to mark the last spot at which the body of Eleanor rested, on its way to Westminster; and hence the archæologists, who seem to us to delight in the most impossible puns, venture to suggest came the name of Chère Reine. The

Cross was built of Caen stone, with Dorset marble steps, and destroyed by order of the Long Parliament; part of the stone was used to pave Whitehall. The Cross appears to have been of considerable dimensions, and was used as a place of execution: here several of the regicides suffered. Proclamations for ages have been read at Charing Cross; and our own gracious queen was proclaimed there. We need not remind you, with Tom Hood, that here King Charles, unlike the unfortunate horsemen of the Epping Hunt, rides on '*in statu quo*,' but we

may notice that this is one of the few London statues that does not appear to have been erected in honour of the late Mr. Guy Fawkes. It is not a Guy, but a beautiful work of art.

The space extending from Charing Cross to Westminster Hall, or Thorney Island, and from the river to St. James's Park, formerly purchased from the monks of Westminster, belonged to the Archbishops of York, and received the name of York Place. There was a public road to Westminster through it, with a gate at either end. Wolsey resided here in great state until his fall, when he, brokenhearted, quitted its water-gate in his barge for Esher.

Wolsey's residence was characterised by a luxury and magnificence unequalled by any subject, and scarcely surpassed by any king. His copes and robes were the richest ever seen. He maintained a train of 800 persons, among whom were nine or ten lords, fifteen knights, and forty squires. His domestics were persons of consequence, for his cook wore a jerkin of satin or velvet, with a gold chain round his neck. When Wolsey rode forth, his comely figure was decked in silk or satin of the finest texture, and of the richest scarlet or crimson dye. His hat and gloves of scarlet, and his shoes silver gilt, inlaid with pearls and diamonds. His mule was trapped with crimson velvet, and his stirrups were of solid silver. And when it pleased the king's majesty for his recreation to visit him, 'the banquets were set forth with masks and mummeries in so gorgeous a sort and costly manner that it was heaven to behold,' writes his secretary, Cavendish. There were numerous dames and damsels meet or apt to dance with the gentlemen, and the whole night passed in banqueting, dancing, and other triumphant devices, to the great comfort of the king, if not to the credit of the cardinal.

A few years later the Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk waited upon Wolsey in those very chambers to demand the Great Seal, and drive Wolsey from his house, which his royal master coveted.

Henry appropriated York Place, or, as it was then named, Whitehall, probably from the whiteness of the stone of which it was constructed, the usual building materials at that time being red brick and timber. The king added many beautiful and pleasant lodgings, buildings, and mansions, together with a tennis-court, bowling-alleys, and a cockpit, for his pastime and solace. From a stone gallery in front he reviewed 15,000 armed citizens in the Tilt Yard (now the Horse Guards), where jousts and tournaments were of constant occurrence. The Palace of Whitehall was seven years in building; and the old palace at Westminster being in utter ruin and decay after the fire, it was decreed that Whitehall and its pertainings should be called the Royal Palace at Westminster. Here Henry and Anne Boleyn were secretly married in a garret of the palace by Dr. Lee, Mrs. Savage, Anne's trainbearer, and two grooms of the chamber, only being present, the shabbiest royal wedding on record.

Holbein, whom the king had taken into the palace, designed a gatehouse for the Tilt Yard, and it remained (used sometimes as a State Paper Office) until 1750, being then known as the Cockpit Gate. It is told of Holbein, that having been annoyed by the continual intrusion of a nobleman, who I suppose favoured him with amateur advice about '*repainting that background and producing tone*,' he knocked his admirer, or critic, down stairs, and then sought the king's protection, telling him the whole story. The noble followed, but found the king defended the painter, and said, 'You have not to deal with Holbein now, but with me. Remember, of seven peasants I can make seven lords, but not one Holbein.' Henry collected many fine pictures, and made also munificent proposals to Raphael and Titian, but they were declined.

At Whitehall Henry VIII. was seized with his last sickness. So great was his fear of death, that several persons had been executed for saying he was dying; even his physicians would not tell him of his approaching end; nor would his

courtiers, until Sir Anthony Denny undertook the task. Cranmer was sent for, but the king was speechless, and a grasp of the hand was the only answer to the archbishop's exhortation. Henry died on Thursday, January 28, 1546. Thursday was a fatal day to Henry and his posterity, as Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth all died on a Thursday.

Edward VI. held a parliament here; and Elizabeth was taken

thence on Palm Sunday a prisoner to the Tower; and when queen, here occurred much of her flirtation with the ill-used Duke of Anjou; and after they had parted at Canterbury, the queen taking a weeping farewell, she would not return to Whitehall for some time, because 'the place should not give cause of remembrance of him from whom she so unwillingly parted.' It was evidently 'a case' with the gentle

WHITEHALL IN THE REIGN OF JAMES I.

Eliza; and had the duke lived, there might have been another royal wedding at Whitehall. Hentzer, who visited England in 1598, has left an interesting account of his visit. He describes the queen (and in no spirit of detraction) as having a wrinkled face, red periwig, little eyes, hooked nose, skinny lips, and black teeth, yet listening still to the flattery of her courtiers concerning her beauty. We don't believe it—

quite. Her books, he says, were in the Greek, Latin, French, and Italian languages, and bound in velvet, with pearls and precious stones set on the binding, and with gold and silver clasps. Her writing materials were kept in two little silver cabinets; she wrote a beautiful hand, unlike Sidney Smith's, which was, he said, 'as if a swarm of ants, escaping from an ink bottle, had walked over a sheet of paper without wiping their

legs.' Her bed—Paul Hentzer was evidently a little of an Iachimo, or shall we say a Paul Pry?—her bedstead was of woods of divers colours, with quilts of gold, silver, silk, velvet, and embroidery. She had a little chest all over pearls, wherein she kept her most valuable jewels, and a piece of clock-work—an Ethiop riding a rhinoceros, with four attendants, who all made a bow when it struck the hour! In the Conduit Court, a Frenchman—the M. Blondin of the period—did feats upon a rope, and bears, bulls, and apes were baited before her in the Tilt Yard. On Wednesdays she had solemn dancing, Sir Christopher Hatton leading off, no doubt, as he had often done in the Temple Hall.

'But all that's bright must fade,'

and Whitehall was not exempt from change. On March 24, 1603, all that remained of our true English Elizabeth was brought here from Richmond, on its way to Westminster Abbey.

In the gardens of Whitehall James I. knighted 300 or 400 judges, serjeants, and doctors of law, Francis Bacon among the number. Here Lord Monteagle told Salisbury of the warning letter he had received of the Gunpowder Plot. Guy Fawkes was examined at Whitehall, in the king's bedchamber, and answered one of James's inquiries by saying, 'One of my objects was to blow Scotchmen back to Scotland.' Old Guy paid dearly for the jest.

Inigo Jones built the present Banqueting House, commenced in 1691, and completed in about two years. It cost 17,000*l.*, his own charges being 8*s.* 4*d.* a day as surveyor, and 4*l.* a year for house rent, clerk, and incidental expenses: so at those rates Inigo could hardly have been the architect of his own fortune. What would Sir Charles Barry have said to that? Nicholas Stone, the master mason, was paid 4*s.* 10*d.* a day. The Banqueting House is now a chapel; and here, on Maundy Thursday, the royal eleemosynary money—those pretty silver pennies and twopences—is distributed to poor and aged men and women. This fine building was

only a part of Inigo's grand design for a palace, which was to have covered twenty-four acres, or nearly twelve times the space of Buckingham Palace. The drawings are preserved at Worcester College, Oxford.

Many most glorious masques by Inigo Jones and Ben Jonson were performed at Whitehall—one cost 3000*l.*

Charles I. added to Henry's collection other pictures of immense value; but on the Civil War Parliament seized on Whitehall (1645), and sold great part of the paintings and statues, and burnt others.

Here, in the Cabinet Room, Charles I. prayed his last prayer in Whitehall. In the Horn Chamber he was delivered to the officers, and through an opening, broken in the wall at the north end, he was led to the scaffold in front of the Banqueting House, and at two o'clock in the afternoon beheaded. Lilly the astrologer asserts, on the authority of Richard Spavin, one of Cromwell's secretaries, that Colonel Joyce was the executioner.

Cromwell had the use of the Cockpit as a lodging, for some time, and to Whitehall he went with the keys of the House of Commons in his pocket, after dissolving the Long Parliament. When he was settled at Whitehall, he repurchased the cartoons, and many other pictures, which had been dispersed, and Evelyn found the palace very glorious, and well furnished. Cromwell's own diet was spare, and not curious, except on public treatments, which were given on every Monday to all officers not below a captain, when he used to dine with them, and a table was spread every day in the week for each officer who should casually come to court. He was a great lover of music, and respected all persons examinous (or eminent) in art. He was often jocund, and would order the drum to beat before dinner was half over, and call in his foot-guards to finish it; and a capital joke it was—for the foot-guards. Milton was then his secretary, and Andrew Marvel, and Waller, his friend and kinsman, were his constant guests, as also young Dryden. On the anniversa-

ries of his great victories at Worcester and Dunbar, Cromwell died (Sept. 3) at Whitehall, and lay in state at Somerset House. Richard Cromwell resided here during his brief exercise of power, and quitted it with only two old trunks, which contained, as he said, the lives and fortunes of all the good people of England—being the congratulatory addresses which had been showered upon him nine months before, when the good people of England thought he deserved them. The Rump Parliament would have sold Whitehall, Hampton Court, and Somerset

House, had not General Monk brought back Charles through the City to Whitehall, taking seven hours to perform the journey. Charles built a stone gallery, where Prince Rupert lodged in 1667, and in Privy Gardens, below it, were suites of apartments for the king's beauties. The Duchess of Portsmouth was very difficult to please, and her lodgings were altered and redecorated twice or thrice.

Charles re-collected, by proclamation, the plate, hangings, pictures, and sculpture, which had been sold or stolen during the Commonwealth,

OLIVER CROMWELL'S HOUSE, WHITEHALL.

and the gardens were laid out in terraces and parterres, and ornamented with bronze, marble, and dials, a few of which are now at Hampton Court. One of those dials was damaged by a nobleman, and Andrew Marvel wrote—

'This place for a dial was too insecure,
And a guard and a garden could not defend;
For so near to the court they will never endure
Any witness to show how their time they mispend.'

Misspent time, indeed, if we recall Evelyn's well-known description of the last Sunday evening Charles lived out in Whitehall. 'The king,'

he says, 'sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, Mazarin, &c., a French boy singing love-songs in those glorious galleries, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset round a large table, a bank of at least 1000*l.* in gold before them:—six days after, all was dust.' What other History of the Court Life of Charles II. is needed?

James II. here washed the feet of the poor on Maundy Thursday; and was one day receiving Quaker Penn in his closet, and the next rebuilding the chapel for Roman wor-

ship, and adorning it with statues. Grinling Gibbons and Verrio were the artists he employed.

When James quitted Whitehall for ever, his palace was soon to be nothing but walls and ruins. A lazy maidservant burning a candle from a pound, instead of cutting it (what does Mrs. Paterfamilias say to *that*?), caused a fire, which destroyed a great part of the palace. Six years later the laundry took fire, and all the pictures in the palace were destroyed, and twelve persons

perished. The site of the ruins was given away by the Crown—part to the Duke of Richmond.

On what was once Thorney Island stands Westminster Abbey, as left by the Confessor and Henry III.

Enter! The very walls are histories; and beneath our feet the past itself seems buried. Look around on every side until you lose the consciousness that all this solemn beauty is the work of man. Look until arise visions of kings and queens, with crowns and sceptres,

CHAUCER'S TOMB, WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

surrounded by hosts of nobles in all their state and glory. Look, until darker visions come—of kings and queens, and nobles wrapped in sercloths, only to be remembered by benefits conferred or crimes committed, or upon still greater men, who have left to all who follow them legacies of great thoughts and ennobling deeds. So with a reverent bow, pass we on to the world without.

Thorney Island, on which the abbey stands, and the old palace of Westminster stood, is 470 feet long

and 370 broad. It was once enclosed within lofty stone walls, having gates—one at King Street (the principal gate); a second near New Palace Yard; a third, opening into Tothill Street; and a fourth near the mill, in College Street. The first Westminster Palace was a royal residence in the days of Canute, and was destroyed by fire in the time of Edward the Confessor, who rebuilt the palace, and died there, in an apartment known as St. Edward's Chamber, and afterwards as the Painted Chamber, when Henry III.

added to the building. When the old tapestry was removed from the walls of this room, at the commencement of the present century, the original paintings were discovered, consisting of sacred subjects, with some battle-pieces, very spiritedly painted, and most valuable as specimens of early art; but the authorities, as a matter of course, had them covered with whitewash, and ought to have been soused in baths of the same mixture for their imbecility. In this chamber the death-warrant of Charles I. was signed.

The old House of Lords was

another portion of the Confessor's palace, and the gunpowder treason of Guy Fawkes was concealed in the kitchen beneath. It was a kitchen, and not a cellar, for in 1828 the buttery hatch and ambry, or cupboard, were discovered—so perhaps wicked Guy may have gained admission on pretence of seeing the cook. This portion of the building was called the Little Hall, to distinguish it from the Great Hall, built by Rufus, for grand banquetings and feastings, on high festivals and coronations, and only ceased to be so used within our memory. Rufus,

GUY FAWKES'S HOUSE, LAMBETH.

returning from Normandy, visited the New Hall at Westminster with a large military retinue. Some person remarked that it was too large—larger than it should have been. The king replied, 'that it was only a bedchamber in comparison with the building which he intended to make.' Rufus, no doubt, would have used the new clock tower as an eight-day clock, and the York and Nelson pillars as a pair of candlesticks. The arrow saved some trouble to the Mr. Gladstone of the period. And here Richard II. was at dinner when he heard that King Philip had entered Normandy. The

lion heart rose up and swore a deep oath that he would never turn away his face until he had met Philip; and as his back chanced to be to the door, they cut a hole through the wall to let the king out, on his way to Portsmouth—a very straightforward proceeding on the part of the king. The Little Hall was called Whitehall—not *the* Whitehall—and it was a Court of Requests in Henry VII.'s time. It was called Poor Man's Court (says Stow), because there he could have right without paying any money. What a pity it was ever abolished to make a House of Lords, where certainly

justice was not to be obtained upon such very easy terms. This house was destroyed by fire in 1834, when the beautiful tapestry, representing

the victories over the Spanish Armada, were burnt, and which had cost the brave Commander of the British fleet not less than 1,613*l.* of

THE HOUSE OF LOUCE AND THE HOUSE OF COMMOX. (Before the Fire in 1834.)

money in Elizabeth's time. The border was composed of the heads of the English commanders. The destruction of this remarkable piece

of work was one of the greatest losses by the fire.
Here, when the Black Prince, and the French king, his prisoner, came

to Westminster, Edward III. sat on his throne to receive the august captive. As John entered the hall, the king descended from his seat and embraced him, and led him to the banquet prepared for his entertainment.

In Richard II.'s time, the hall in part was rebuilt as we now see it, and the wonderful roof placed on it. It is composed of chestnut wood, and the vulgar believed that spiders

could not live there, thinking it made of Irish oak, which is supposed to possess a property adverse to those primitive weavers. During the rebuilding, Richard built a temporary wooden building, which was open on all sides (an effective mode of ventilation worthy the attention of Dr. Reid), that constituents might see what was going on, and, as Pennant remarks, 'to secure freedom of debate, he surrounded

THE STAR CHAMBER AND EXCHEQUER BUILDINGS AT WESTMINSTER. (Destroyed by Fire, 1834.)

the house with four thousand Cheshire archers, with bows bent and arrows notched ready to shoot.' The votes of supply must have passed with a rapidity which a modern Chancellor of the Exchequer must envy. When Richard II. renounced his crown in this hall, Henry IV. stood forward and claimed succession as descended from the third Harry.

St. Stephen's Chapel was built by the king of that name, and twice

rebuilt, the last time by the Second and Third Edwards. When the chapel was fitted up for the Commons, in Edward VI.'s time, the walls were wainscoted, a new floor raised above, and a new ceiling placed below the original one, so that the beautiful paintings—and they were beautiful—and other artistic embellishments, of what are called the dark ages, were preserved, and revealed in 1800, when the side

walls of the chapel were taken down to make room for the Commons at the time of the Union. Many of the paintings were in oil, and, of course, representing scriptural subjects. There exists a royal order, dated 1350, for impressment of painters and others for these very works. The walls, as was seen, had been originally adorned with sculpture, richly decorated in colour and gilding, and the windows had been filled with stained glass, thus showing a high development of art. The cloisters were added by Henry VIII.,

and vied in splendour with the neighbouring mausoleum of Henry VII. The poet Chaucer was appointed Clerk of the Works, and resided in the precincts and on the very site of Henry VII.'s Chapel.

Thrice had fire vanquished the old palace, the last being when Henry VIII. was driven to seek shelter in York Place (*the Whitehall*), and from that time the old palace ceased to be a royal residence, remaining for a long time in utter ruin and decay, the Great Hall with the courts of law and

INTERIOR OF THE STAR CHAMBER, WESTMINSTER. (Before the Fire, 1834.)

some other offices excepted. The courts of law were, as you know, originally, in fact, the 'King's Court,' and the king presided in person, the bench being his seat, until the inconvenience of the judges following the Court became so great, they were permanently settled at the king's chief residence, the Palace of Westminster. That terrible institution, the Star Chamber, the terror and abhorrence of the people of England, and for whose destruction we owe the Commonwealth a deep debt of gratitude, whose decrees over-ruled law and liberty, was at Westminster, and the building so

named, erected in Elizabeth's time on the site of an older one, was pulled down in the present century. Its name is thought by Sir Thomas Smith to have come either because it was full of windows, or because the first roof was decked with images of stars gilded—Blackstone says from its being a place of deposit for contracts of the Jews, called *starra*, or stars, from the Hebrew *shetar*.

How many changes of scenes and actors have occurred in that old hall besides those already named! Here Sir William Wallace was tried and condemned; Sir Thomas More

and Protector Somerset were doomed to the scaffold; the murderers of Sir Thomas Overbury, the notorious Earl and Countess of Somerset, were tried here, and here also the great Earl of Strafford was condemned, when 'none was more a looker-on than he,' the king being present and the Commons sitting bareheaded, and here Charles I. sat covered, the colours taken at Naseby above his head, arraigned for treason to his people, before the counsellors of the Commonwealth, and Lilly, the astrologer, saw the golden top fall from the king's staff—an omen of what followed. Here, on June 26th, 1653 (to the Naseby banners were added those taken at Worcester, Preston, and Dunbar), Oliver Cromwell came—the Lord Mayor bearing the City sword before him—and was inaugurated Protector under a prince-like canopy of state, with the Bible, sword, and sceptre of the Commonwealth before him. Seven years later, at that hall-gate, Charles II. was proclaimed, and upon the south gable were set up the heads of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw—Cromwell's remained there twenty years. Here James II.'s seven bishops were acquitted, and in 1745 Kilmarnock, Balmerino, and Lovat were condemned.

Here Warren Hastings was impeached, and the last public trial in the hall itself was Lord Melville's, in 1806.

Booksellers, who were first migratory, like hawkers, and then became known as *stationarii*, from having booths or stalls at the corners of streets, in market and other public places exposed their wares, as did sempstresses and milliners, in Westminster Hall, and the revenues were received by the Warden of the Fleet Prison; but the poor scholars of Westminster were allowed to sell books here without charge. Not many years ago, fellows frequented the courts to be hired as witnesses, and carried straws in their shoes to show their infamous profession.

Old Palace Yard has been the scene of many popular executions. The front of the scaffold was usually towards the hall. Among others, Guy Fawkes, Winter, Rookwood,

and Keyes, for the Gunpowder Plot; Lord Sanquar, for procuring the assassination of Turner, a fencing master, in Fleet Street, and whose hanging Lord Bacon declared to be the most exemplary piece of justice in any king's reign. Here, in 1618, the gallant, noble, brave Sir Walter Raleigh was executed, on a sentence found fourteen years before. 'What dost thou fear? Strike, man!' were his last words to the executioner. Here Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton stood, one June day (30th, 1637), in the pillory, when Bastwick's wife received his ears in her apron and kissed them. And here the Duke of Hamilton, Lord Holland, and Lord Capel lost their heads.

In New Palace Yard, the open space before the north entrance of the hall, were two interesting structures—the conduit which flowed with wine for all comers, on occasions of great festivities—something like a drinking-fountain! and the lofty clock-tower, erected out of a fine inflicted on one of the Chief Justices of the King's Bench, for making a rasure of a court-roll, and reducing a poor man's fine from 13s. 4d. to 6s. 8d. The clock struck hourly, and was intended to remind the judges of the fate of their brother, and teach lawyers the difference of value between 13s. 4d. and 6s. 8d.

In the Chapter-house of the Abbey, on the right, the Commons of England first sat as a separate body from the Lords; and, upon one occasion, when they became riotous, and created a turmoil (a Congress, in fact), the abbot waxed wroth, and turned out the legislative wisdom bodily, and vowed the place should not be again defiled with such rabble.

The last coronation procession that passed through Palace Yard to banquet in the Great Hall, was George IV.'s. We knew a little boy, for there were little boys when we were young, though now-a-days, we believe, there are only children and 'young fellahs,' who was sent to bed at seven o'clock on the eve of that ceremony, 1821, and who scarcely slept a wink until he was waited upon at twelve o'clock, and

then dressed in a plum-coloured suit, and the collar of his shirt turned back over his shoulders. This little boy was taken in a coach to Palace Yard; deposited in a house with scaffolding in front, and shown afterwards into a room, dimly lighted by candles. He was told to keep himself quiet, but the glimpses he had of a platform stretching from the hall to the abbey, whose fretted work was all a-glow in the light of

many fires, round which were seated soldiers in their great-coats, their arms piled and glittering in the fire-light also, kept the little boy wide awake and in considerable excitement. At the early hour of five he took in the dim room, on the recommendation of another little boy, what the late Mr. Robson called 'a glass of very excellent sherry,' and found, on emerging into daylight, that his head had been con-

OLD CLOCK HOUSE, WESTMINSTER. (From a Print by Hollar.)

verted into a humming-top, and only returned again to its natural state in the dim room, so that our little friend came to the conclusion, that when the ceremony of the day took place, he should not be able to see it. The fates were more propitious; and he saw twenty Life-guardsmen, with laurel in the scales of their breastplates, and with swords drawn, ride around an open carriage, in which sat Queen Caroline and Alderman Wood! A surging mob was in the distance, shout-

ing and groaning alternately, and the little boy thought that a civil war had broken out, and was coming into Palace Yard. He saw the queen go away as she had come, having been refused admission to the old hall, and felt very much relieved by the proceedings. After a while, red lines of soldiers took their stand beside the platform, and real officers on horseback rode about doing an immensity of nothing. Trumpets and drums! Trumpets and drums! began braying and

bumping on all sides, and beef-eaters and heralds, and other splendid beings connected with the court, marched past, preceding the 'first gentleman in Europe,' with a crown of diamonds on his head, and a golden canopy over that, and a velvet train, a gold-embroidered behind, supported by noble young pages with feathers in their caps. That was King George IV. on the way to take dinner in the hall, after he had been crowned in the abbey. Then came Lord Castlereagh, with such a plume of feathers in his hat, that forty years have not removed them from the mental eyes of the little boy, they were so tremendous! Then there was the Champion of England, Mr. Dymock, in real armour, and mounted on a beautiful white charger, and he rode into the hall to challenge all the king's enemies, so the little boy was told, and he wished at that moment that he could have been his second. And then the little boy and his tempter went back into the dim room, and drank the king's health with three times three, and that is all the little boy remembers of the last coronation procession that passed into old Westminster Hall, little thinking that he should live to tell the little story here to-day.

We will pass at once through the beautiful gate of small square stone and flint boulder, glazed and tessellated—with its terra-cotta busts, naturally coloured, and gilt—designed by Holbein, and used until 1750 as a State-paper office, until it was pulled down to widen the street, and so enter St. James's Park. It may not be amiss to pause a minute at the Admiralty,* considered to be, without flattery, the ugliest building in Her Majesty's service—and that is saying a great deal—the site of Wallingford House, from whose roof Bishop Usher saw King Charles led to the scaffold, and swooned at the sight. Most of our kings, save the Conqueror, had vessels of war; and as early as 1297 the records speak of a William de Laybourn as *Amiral*

* The present screen was erected by the Brothers Adams to conceal the ugliness of the building. Lord Nelson lay in state in one of the apartments, Jan. 8, 1806.

de la Mer, or First Lord of the Admiralty. It is usual to suppose that Henry VII. provided our first State Navy, but he did little more than build the Great Harry. It was his son, Harry VIII., who perfected the designs of his father. He instituted Admiralty and Navy Offices, the Trinity House, and made the sea service a distinct profession, leaving at his death a navy of 12,000 tons, including the *Henri Grace de Dieu*, of 1000 and more. These ships were high, unwieldy, and narrow, with lofty poops and prows; and one, the *Mary Rose*, 'a goodly ship of the largest size,' Raleigh says, her ports being within sixteen inches of the water, capsized at Spithead in swinging in presence of the king. Most of the officers and crew were drowned. In Elizabeth's reign such lubberly craft as the *Mary Rose* received but little improvement; but the pay of the seamen was increased from 5s. to 10s. per month; and the London merchants encouraged to build ships convertible into men-of-war on emergency. Of the 176 ships and 15,000 men which met the Spanish Armada, a considerable number were not 'shippes royal.' The first great impulse given towards making us a nation of mariners was when Frobisher departed for the Northern Seas, and Queen Bess, the prototype of Black-eyed Susan, bade 'Adieu! Adieu!' and waved her lily hand to him and his gallant crew—their example to be followed by other enterprising men, and hardy as the oak which bore them. James I. made a considerable advance in the construction of vessels, and employed Phineas Pett, the scientific ship-builder, who relieved the vessels of much of their top hamper. Frobisher was the first Englishman who tried to find a north-west passage to China (1576). Frobisher's Straits are named after him. He returned to England, bringing with him a quantity of black ore supposed to contain gold, and this circumstance induced money-loving Elizabeth to fit out a second expedition, which proved unsuccessful. Frobisher was killed at the taking of Brest, 1594.

But avast!—I believe that is the

proper word—or we shall drift out to sea, instead of taking a peep at the Horse Guards, on the site of the old Tilt Yard, and then away to St. James's Park, originally a swampy field belonging to St. James's Hospital, and which Henry VIII. attached to the buildings of Whitehall, when he took up his abode at the Hospital, and converted it into a royal palace, of which only the old gate remains. During the reigns of Elizabeth and the two first Stuarts little was done for the Park. It was merely a nursery for deer; and at one time a small royal menagerie (Evelyn), containing, amongst other animals, two Balearian cranes, one with a wooden leg, made by a soldier, occupied the inward Park. From St. James's Palace to Whitehall walked Charles I. (Jan. 30, 1648-9) on the way to death, and is said to have pointed to a tree planted by his brother Henry, near Spring Gardens. The Council of the Commonwealth once proposed to cut down the living gallery of aged trees in St. James's Park, and sell them, so that no footsteps of monarchy might remain unviolated. They were spared, however; and beneath them Cromwell asked Whitelock, 'What if a man should take upon him to be king?' and was told, in reply, 'That the remedy would be worse than the disease.' The answer, no doubt, closed the conversation.

Charles II. added thirty-six acres to the Park, and had it greatly improved and ornamented by Le Nôtre. Evelyn and Pepys have left many records of the alterations then effected, and tell how there, for a wager, before the king, Lords Castlehaven and Arran run down and killed a stout buck: how, for 1000*l.*, the Western and Northern men wrestled before his Majesty, and large sums were betted, the Western men winning. 'In a smooth hollow walk, covered with powdered cockle shells, to make it hind, planted with trees on both sides, having at each end an iron hoop depending from an arm of a long pole, through which a ball was struck,' the game of Pall Mall was played by king and nobles. Here Cibber saw King Charles ca-

ressing his dogs and feeding his ducks, to the delight of his loving people; and virtuous Evelyn was shocked to note 'familiar discourse between the king and Mistress Nelly, as they called an impudent comedian, she looking out of her garden on the top, and the king standing on the green walk beneath,' part of which remains by the wall of Marlborough House; and amongst the list of Nelly's debts was the account for making this green mound, and also her sedan chair (34*l.*), and her silver bedstead, which cost over 1100*l.*

Here, in Birdcage Walk, was a pleasant aviary, the keeper, Edward Storey, living at Storey's Gate; and here, in the inward Park, was the Decoy, or Duck Island, with withy pots for the wild fowl to lay their eggs in. Here, in winter, Pepys, for the first time in his life, saw the people sliding with the skates, and which he thought a very pretty art—the King and Court looking on, no doubt as they did when Evelyn was a spectator also.

The Park was a sanctuary from arrest, and traitorous expressions used there were severely punished. One Francis Head was whipped from Charing Cross to the Haymarket, fined, and imprisoned, for wishing James III. a long and prosperous reign; and a soldier, for drinking the Duke of Ormond's health, and hoping soon to wear his right master's cloth, was whipped in the Park. The Duke of Wharton was seized by a guard for singing a Jacobite song—

'The king shall have his own again;'

and Richard Harris, for throwing an orange at the king, was sent to Bedlam—a proper punishment for the 'man's first disobedience, and the fruit.' Aubrey tells a rather uncomfortable story of one Evans, who had a fungous nose. One day, he seized the king's hand, rubbed his nose with it, and was cured—having previously kissed his royal pocket handkerchief. 'The king was disturbed.' We should fancy so!

At the death of Charles, the Park was deserted by royalty, but continued to be frequented by the peo-

ple; and here, in summer, the fashion of the day walked for two hours after dinner. Tom Browne mentions: 'Bareheaded beaux, French fops, clusters of senators, belles in sacks and powder; whilst the milk-women cried, "A can of fresh milk, ladies. A can of red cow's milk, sir, if you please."'" We have often tasted it when a boy, and a cow or two still stand near Spring Gardens.

Spring Gardens was a place of entertainment in Charles I.'s and Charles II.'s time. It had its pheasantry, bowling-green, boxes, bathing-pond, dark alleys, and derived its name from a concealed spring to a jet of water which wetted whoever trod upon it. A six shilling ordinary—though the king's proclamation allowed but two shillings to be charged elsewhere, and there was continual bibbing and drinking all day, and two or three quarrels a week. It was more than once suppressed for its irregularities, and New Spring Gardens, or Vauxhall, opened in its stead.

Now Drummonds stands where gardens once did spring,
And wild ducks quack where grasshoppers did sing.'

The Mulberry Gardens were planted by James I., and were originally intended to breed silkworms. It became a place of pleasant entertainment, and occupied the site of Buckingham Palace.

'A princely palace on that space doth rise,
Where Sedley's noble muse foud mulberries.'

On the south-east side, from Henry VIII.'s time, was Rosamond's Pond, a place of assignation, according to the old comedies of Congreve, Farquhar, and Colley Cibber. It derived its name, it is said, from the number of silly boys and girls who drowned themselves for love—cold water being a capital extinguisher of flames, either of fire or love. Hogarth painted a picture of this pond for the small charge of 1*l.* 7*s.*, the receipt for the same existing in Mrs. Hogarth's handwriting. The pond was filled up in 1770. George Colman the younger was born at the south-eastern corner of Rosamond's Pond; and near it, in Petty France, is Milton's Garden House, when he

was Cromwell's secretary, and before his blindness. Hazlitt lived there, and entertained Haydon, Charles Lamb, and his poor sister, and all sorts of odd people, in a large room, wainscotted.

Beneath a tent on the Parade of St. James's Park was placed the funeral car of Arthur Duke of Wellington, and down the Mall and past Buckingham Palace passed in procession of solemn grandeur, never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

The space between Charing Cross and St. James's appears to have been fields about 1560, and down this road Sir Thomas Wyatt marched, hard by the Court-gate of St. James's to Whitehall. Where Carlton House stood were, in Henry's VI.'s time, some monastic buildings belonging to the monks of Westminster, and called 'The Rookery;' and there, when the buildings were demolished at the Reformation, a secret smithy was discovered, used by Henry VI. for the practice of alchemy. Near here Erasmus lived.

Carlton House, with its gardens, wood-work, and wilderness, and which extended from the open space in Regent Street, where stands the York Column, to Marlborough House, belonged to Frederick Prince of Wales, father of George III., and he added a bowling-green, grottoes, and statuary to the garden. The Prince died at Kew in 1751, and the Princess at Carlton House in 1772. The first house was red brick, but George IV. cased it with stone, and added an Ionic screen and a Corinthian portico, the pillars of which were transferred to the National Gallery when Carlton House was pulled down.*

We remember the admiration excited by the tall porter of George IV., who allowed himself to be looked at

* The first purchase of pictures by the Government for the National Gallery was Mr. Angerstein's collections for 57,000*l.*—about forty in number. The collection has been greatly increased, since 1822, by gifts from Sir G. Beaumont, Mr. Holwell Carr, the British Institution, and other donors. The edifice in Trafalgar Square, designed by Mr. Wilkins, was opened in 1838.

—framed in the lodge doorway—once a day; he was the most tremendous ‘proud young porter’ we have ever seen.

The street which now bears the name of Pall Mall was occasionally called Catherine Street in Charles II.’s time. The houses on the south side had gardens looking to the Park, and divided from it by the mound on which Mistress Nelly Gwynne stood to talk to the king. Her house was on the site of No. 79, and when first presented to her was only a leasehold. The conveyance of a free message from Nelly to the king, however, procured it to be a freehold, and it is now the only freehold on the south, or park-side, of Pall Mall. The looking-glass which has often reflected Nelly’s pretty face now hangs in the visitors’ dining-room of the Army and Navy Club. On the north side was a row of trees, 140 in number. Bubb Doddington and Lady Griffin—terrible name!—who was seized for putting treasonable letters into the false bottoms of two large brandy-bottles—filled with a treasonable spirit no doubt—lived here. At Marlborough House—built by Wren for the great Duke of Marlborough, upon part of the pheasantry of St. James’s, at a cost, the duchess says, of 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.*—the great warrior died. The duchess intended to have made a grand entrance into Pall Mall, but Walpole, to annoy her, bought the requisite houses in Pall Mall, and shut her grace in. The duchess delighted to call the king ‘Neighbour George,’ and once received the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs sitting up in bed. Marlborough House was bought for Prince Leopold on his union with the Princess Charlotte, who, it may be remembered, escaped before her marriage from a house in Warwick Street, Cockspur Street (a gloomy place, we remember it), and went in a hackney coach to her mother. Marlborough House is now settled on the Prince of Wales.

George IV. proposed to connect Carlton House, Marlborough House, and St. James’s by a gallery of

National Portraits, but Mr. Nash built out the idea, and Carlton House was deserted.

Schomberg House, built in 1650, and enlarged and beautified by the son of the Duke of Schomberg (killed at the Battle of the Boyne 1690), is still preserved, though divided into two or three tenements. Formerly it was a fair mansion enclosed with a garden, and at the Restoration was inhabited by several Court favourites. The Duke of Cumberland—he of Culloden—died here (1760); Astley, the artist and ‘beau,’ and Cosway, the miniature painter, lived in Pall Mall, as did also Gainsborough, who died in a second-floor room, having been reconciled to Sir Joshua Reynolds. His last words were, ‘We are all going to heaven, and Vandyke is of the party.’

There is a story told of the celebrated Dr. Sydenham, which it is now difficult to realize. He was sitting at his window smoking his pipe, and with a silver pot before him. A thief seized the pot and ran into Bond Street, and was lost amongst the bushes—the thief, no doubt, rejoicing at his pot-luck.

An impostor named Psalmanazar also lived in Pall Mall, and invented a language which he said was that of Formosa, and deceived many of the wise men of the east and of the west, who, by-the-by, are generally to be bought very great bargains, and would possibly have reviewed a Grammar of the Gorillas.

At the King’s Arms, in Pall Mall, the Liberty or Rump Steak Club (not to be confounded with the existing club of that name established by Rich and his scene-painter Lambert, 1735), was held, every member a peer, and in opposition to Walpole.

The Haymarket, when it was opened in Elizabeth’s time, comprised only a few houses and hedge-rows, and where—since 1791, when the present Opera House was opened, ‘Semiramide,’ ‘Lucrezia Borgia,’ and ‘Norma’ have held sway—‘washing was taken in.’ We shall return to this locality presently.

V E N I C E.

(ILLUSTRATED BY GUSTAVE DORÉ.)

A GAIN upon the lips of men
 It passes, a familiar word,
 VENETIA!—poetry of names—
 Sweetest and saddest earth has heard;
 Once, noblest, too, for she has shone
 Single and lustrous as a star,
 Nor always one portending woe,
 Or lurid with the reek of war.

Bright through the far receding past
 The radiance of her greatness glows,
 As from the marge of sunlit seas,
 A path of light ascending goes;
 And glorious even in her fall,
 She shines, as when in western skies
 The blooming purple faints and fades,
 And all the golden glory dies.

Grand were the old barbaric days
 When in her regal splendour throned
 She ruled,—a light-effulging sphere,
 By tributary kingdoms zoned;
 The Cleopatra of the earth
 She revelled then, while on her breast
 The wealth of all the Orient glowed
 And blinded the adoring West.

Noble those days when in her pride
 She brook'd no bridegroom but the sea,
 And in its rough embraces caught
 The fatal longing—to be free!
 Fatal, since Despotisms yet
 Shrank from that light of later times,
 Or saw and hated what they saw,
 And held it heaviest of crimes.

Oh! saddest spectacle of earth,—
That queenly brow the common scorn,
Its grandeur wholly passed away,
Its beauty utterly forlorn!
A desolation as of death
Has stricken to that royal heart,—
What but a memory is her fame?
Where in the present is her part?

And for the future? years will die,
And years on years, revolving moons
Will gild her lion's shadowy wings,
And tremble in her still lagunes.
But never will the hour return
That yields her back her ancient reign,
And never will the nations bend
In homage at her feet again.

The past is past. No second prime,
No second summer beauty knows,
And she, the fallen, the forlorn,
Has but her memories and her woes;
No gleams of freedom stir her heart,
No visions of recovered power,—
Only her beauty cannot die,
And it and sorrow are her dower.

W. S.

THE CRUISE OF THE 'APHRODITE.'

BE you come for the "Half-rotted," sir?" Such was the question addressed to Gus Maltre and myself, as the train stopped, on an afternoon in September, 1863, at the Harwich platform.

Now Gus and I had been rather soured by the latter part of our journey. We had started with every chance of comfort; and our long experience of the Great Eastern Railway had induced us to be very thankful for so remarkable a prospect. And for a time all had gone well. We had had no fish, single ladies, or old gentlemen in our carriage; the train was only two hours late, and we had beguiled the time with much pleasant conversation and tobacco. Our friend Marling had asked us to take a cruise with him in his schooner-yacht; and as we had always understood that she was the finest vessel that ever floated—"not one of your gimcrack craft, but a thorough comfortable, sea-going schooner;" as we knew Marling to be the most genial soul that ever lived—and withal, so good a sailor that his yacht bore the reputation of being handled better than any frigate in Her Majesty's navy—we had found much to talk over and to congratulate ourselves upon.

Gus had gone to look after the luggage, when a burly, thick-set, blue man, with a burly, thick-set, blue face, came up to me and asked the question—

'Be you for the Half-rotted?'

'No,' said I, confidently, and in the innocence of my heart, but not without some wonderment at the names current in Harwich. At that moment Gus returned, to whom I repeated the question. He too wondered for a moment, and then burst into a loud laugh. 'The Half-rotted!' said he; 'my opinion is that this concerns us; remember sailors are phonetic as to spelling. Here, my man!'

The blue man returned.

'How do you spell it?'

The blue-faced being driven into a corner, scratched his head, but did not at first succeed in producing

anything from it. At length he turned towards a distant corner, where lounged another blue mass, and called out—

'Here, you Dick!' You Dick lumbered up to where we stood, in a shamefaced sort of way, and sulkily touched his hat. He was a black-browed, sunken-eyed fellow, with a deep scar on his forehead, and would not at first sight have been taken for an amiable man; but he was too much for Gus, who sat down on a friendly packing-case, and held his sides in convulsions of laughter.

It was all a mystery to me. I looked from Gus to 'you Dick,' and from you Dick to Gus, in mystification. Gus at length took pity on me, and pointed at the cause of his laughter. I followed his finger, and the mystery was solved. On Dick's breast was embroidered in red letters **APHRODITE**.

'Didn't I tell you they were phonetic?' he gasped: 'so they are; only instead of spelling according to sound, they sound according to spelling—"Aphrodite," and "Half-rotted"—don't you see?' He went off into more convulsions, and very nearly fell under the engine. This time I joined him, to the disgust of our blue friend, who now stood revealed as Burries, first mate and chief disagreeable of Marling's schooner.

'Ah! I ain't much of a scholar,' he grumbled, 'but that's the way they spell that—that I dew know. Here, you Dick! can't you take the gentlemen's things?' And Dick incontinently shouldered our four heavy portmanteaus (each of which had been charged for as extra luggage, as being overweight), and led the way out of the station.

A short pull took us on board the *Aphrodite*, which lay with her folded white wings, like a beautiful sea-bird at rest on the water. Marling was at the gangway to welcome us, looking, in his rough pilot-coat and tarpaulin hat, every inch a sailor; while his easy, graceful bearing and gentle manners, equally proclaimed

him every inch a gentleman; and, in fact, he was both—a gentleman-sailor, which is what no other country than England can produce. We had much to talk of. Marling first insisted on showing us the various improvements he had made in the vessel—how he had taken two feet off the mast; how he had replaced his old standing-rigging by wire; how he had 'shifted his weights,' so that she was to sail twice as well. And then we had to examine the new patent anchor—which I am bound to say was very ugly, and not at all like the emblem of hope we had been used to), and the improved binnacle, and a most complicated American windlass—all of which we duly admired, in the most profound ignorance of their merits. We were better able to appreciate the comfort and refinement of the cabins, which were a succession of luxurious boudoirs, panelled with looking-glasses, rich with crimson silk, and surrounded with couches, soft and inviting. There were three sleeping-cabins—one quite aft, opening on to the companion, and appropriated to my use; next to that the main-cabin, serving as dining and drawing-room, and occupying the whole breadth of the vessel; and then two more sleeping-baths, for Marling himself and Maltre. Forward of those, again, were the pantry and the fore-castle, where the crew (six in number, with Burrles), lived and slept. I have, as will be seen, a reason for describing the situation of the cabins. Had they been differently arranged or had I slept in any other than the aftermost, I might never have lived to write this account.

Early on the next morning we weighed anchor, and dropped down with the ebb before a light breeze, only just enough to give sufficient command of the ship to take her out of the harbour—the entrance to which, as Marling informed us, is one of the nastiest pieces of navigation he knows. We were all there, standing together, Marling steering, and were talking with the most pleasing anticipation of our prospects in the trip we had just com-

menced, which was nothing less than a cruise to the Mediterranean. We spoke low, for Marling had not let the men into the secret of our destination, being sure, as he said, that if he had done so, the crew would have left him to a man, so averse are the sailors of these parts to long voyages. He proposed to tell them only when we should be well clear of the land, when they must perforce reconcile themselves to it.

For several days nothing of note disturbed our enjoyment. The weather was delightful, though somewhat cold; the wind favoured us, and our only occupation the livelong day was inhaling ozone, eating and drinking, and pitying the lot of the fog-beridden Londoners we had left behind us. On the fifth day, Marling called the men together, and told them he was bound for 'the Straits' and beyond, and hoped they would do their duty and behave well, which, he said, would not be forgotten in their wages on arriving home again. The announcement of a long voyage appeared to produce a very unfavourable impression among the crew, who looked at each other sulkily, and the ill-favoured Dick even made a few steps forward, and glanced furtively from out the corners of his eyes at Marling, as though about to speak; but apparently he thought better of it, for he walked forward again with the rest of the crew, who collected together on the windlass, talking over the matter. Burrles was steering; but his eye wandered ever and anon from the binnacle to the group forward, where loomed the gigantic Dick, taller by a head and shoulders than the rest. At last he spoke—not to Marling, but to me, whom, as being the most essential landsman of the party, he had taken under his especial patronage—

'That there Dick is a scholar, he is—he can read and write.'

I did not see the application of the remark, so said nothing; and Burrles relapsed into an alternate contemplation of the crew and the binnacle. Burrles was a dull, heavy, slow-moving, Suffolk-bred animal, but there was, as I thought,

something very honest about his face. Again he spoke—

'I don't know much about that there, I don't. He come from the North Country, he dew—Liverpool or somewheres.'

I puzzled in vain over the meaning of these enigmatic assertions, and got out of the difficulty by asking what he thought of the weather. He gave a low-spirited look to windward, and replied that he 'didn't like the look of that bank, he didn't.' This was pleasing and reassuring, for, having been instructed in the ways of Burrles, I knew that in all his opinions he was so invariably wrong, that he was as good a guide as if he had been always right. Marling was quite pleased, when he came up to take his observation, to learn that Burrles was desponding, and foretold a long spell of fair weather and favourable winds. And so indeed it turned out.

The next morning the wind fell, and for two days we had almost a calm, and the vessel lay rolling with the long Atlantic swell, making scarce any way at all. Then a fresh breeze sprung up, and we 'took in our kites' and flew before it at the rate of ten knots an hour, the *Aphrodite* going, as Marling said, 'as comfortably as an old shoe.'

On the following Thursday night—the wind was still right astern, and we were off the coast of Spain—I was lying asleep in my berth, when I was all at once dimly conscious of being disturbed in my rest by a trampling and scuffling. I was dreaming of a battle, and heard shouts and oaths, and cries for help; and I thought I was looking on, but with a sort of feeling that I ought to take a part in the fray. Then for a moment I fell off from my dream, and sunk again to sleep; but soon I heard another fight and a louder shout: and this time I half awoke, still with that same uncomfortable feeling that I was somehow concerned in the struggle. Another shout. This time I quite awoke. The shout was repeated. There was a trampling in Marling's cabin, mixed with curses and blows. I jumped from my berth and rushed forward. For a moment I stood

dazed and confused at the scene before me. Marling lay half out of his berth, bleeding from a wound in his head, while over him stood two men, one holding a lantern, and the other binding him with a rope. I rushed forward and planted a blow, straight out from the shoulder, on the ear of the man with the lantern. Never shall I forget the sensation of devilish pleasure with which I felt my fist go home. He fell like an ox, with his head in the fender, and I was turning to the other man, when I was suddenly seized from behind in a grasp of iron. In a second, I was down on my back; and, looking up, I saw over me the diabolical face of Dick, who was kneeling on my chest. Uttering the most frightful imprecations, he began to tie my hands together. I struggled hard; but such was his weight that I was powerless; and in a very short time I was lying on the floor, bound hand and foot. Then, for the first time, I tried to gather my ideas together. In vain. I was amazed; my brain was in a whirl; I could not take in the events of the last few minutes. But my eyes fell on the man I had knocked down; and I felt a savage pleasure to see that the blood was trickling down his forehead, and that he lay quite motionless.

Dick, having secured Marling, now came back to me and shook his fist in my face, with a scowl that rendered his features so incredibly repulsive, that I involuntarily shut my eyes, not from fear, but from repulsion. The two then carried me into my berth, and locked the door which separated me from Marling. I opened my mouth to speak; but Dick broke in without giving me time:

'None of your jaw. I tell you what it is; we don't mean to go to the Straits; and we've just taken the ship into our own hands.—D'ye hear?

At this I broke out—

'You infernal scoundrel! you shall suffer for this when we get to England. It is mutiny.'

Here I stopped, conscious of having said too much. A grin of satisfaction overspread the ruffian's

face, and he turned to his companion:

'There, Bill, you hear what he says: you'd best have taken my advice. Dead men tell no tales.'

With this they left me in darkness. I lay there till morning, with the hard cords chafing my wrists and ankles, unable even to turn over—for they had lashed my arms to the stanchions—and trying to frame for myself some explanation of the scene I had just gone through. I could hear Marling groaning in his cabin, and occasionally speaking as if to a second person, from which I inferred that he was guarded. Gus Maltre and Burrles I had not seen or heard; and I supposed that they too must be secured—I felt certain that Burrles was not one of the mutineers.

At length a pale ray of light showed me that morning was come. Soon after I heard them changing the watch on deck, and I could distinguish that a discussion was being held among them as to plans. They did not seem all to agree together. I heard Dick speaking—

'So you're frightened now, are you? You talked big enough about taking the ship back to England; and now, when I've done all the dirty work, you turn out a set of cowards, damn you!'

Then I heard another voice—

'We ain't no more frightened than what you are; but what are we to do when we get to England? It'll be all found out. If the governor was to die, we should swing for it, we should.'

'I tell you what mate: we won't go to England.'

Then followed some conversation in too low a tone for me to catch, but which appeared to satisfy them; a voice, however, began—

'But we are so short-handed: four of us ain't enough to work the ship.'

'We'll have that fine gentleman out of the after-cabin, and make him work double tides. We owe him one for damaging our mate.'

This was agreed to at once; and shortly afterwards Dick himself came and unbound me.

'Now, you sir! we mean to make

a sailor of you, and you may thank your stars for it. Only mind, if you attempt any tricks, overboard you go. Now then, move along, will you!'

I made no answer, but walked before him up the companion-ladder.

'Now just you go up to the cross-trees, and send down the topsail.'

I glanced around. The crew were looking sullenly at me. It was useless to resist; and I went forward without a word, and began my ascent up the rigging of the main-mast. The vessel was rolling heavily in the Atlantic swell, and as I got higher, the motion got worse, until, when I reached the cross-trees, and mounted them, clasping the mast, I felt quite dizzy and ready to fall off at every lurch. My hands were bleeding in several places. I dared not look below, but I heard Dick's voice:

'Higher up! cast off the halyard and lacing.'

I looked up, and saw nothing but the tapering topmast, bending with the pressure of the topsail, and the truck against the sky. A film seemed to come over my eyes. But I felt a kind of strange pride in doing my task. I clung with arms and legs to the mast, and crept slowly upwards. It seemed to me that I was there for hours, rocking to and fro, now upright for an instant, now overhanging the sea till the horizon seemed to close in over my head. I found the end of the lacing; I found the halyard, and untied the knots: then I grasped at the sail, bellying out and flapping in the wind. Again and again it slipped from my grasp. I tore my nails to pieces with the coarse canvas, but at length I mastered it. Perilous as was my situation, I could not forbear a feeling of pride when I saw it hauled flapping down to the deck. I slipped down by the stay again, my hands bleeding, and my head still swimming in dizziness.

'Now go forward and keep a lookout; and if you move aft the foremast you'll just have a rope's-ending, mind you that.'

I went and sat on the windlass, while Dick and two of the crew

went below and ate their breakfast. They had broken open the spirit-locker, and had got a bottle of curaçoa, which they drank over their breakfast, with remarks which at any other time would have afforded me much amusement. But I was too much occupied with my own thoughts to heed them much. The situation was not a pleasant one to contemplate, and the prospect before me still less so. What their intentions were I could not imagine; but I heard much disjointed talk of rich prizes, and burning ships, and making heaps of money, which puzzled even more than it alarmed me. It was absurd to suppose that they intended to turn pirates. In the first place, there were no arms on board except two fowling-pieces, and scarcely any ammunition at all. We were steering, too, as I had noticed on coming on deck, due north—directly back to England; and altogether I was quite unable to give any intelligible meaning to the few disjointed phrases I could hear. What galled me most was the idea of being made the menial of such stupid brutes as I knew our crew to be. But Dick was evidently not only a desperate character, but a shrewd plotter. I saw with rage that, although, as compared with Marling, Burrles, and Maltire, who were doubtless confined in their cabins, I was comparatively free, still, that I was powerless to do anything; for to have reached either of them, I must have gone aft the whole length of the vessel in full view of the steersman, to the companion, or else through the fore-castle, where the rest of the men were assembled.

All day long I was made to remain on deck, and to do the hardest work of the ship; and as we were beating up against a head-wind by short tacks, I was hauling aft the fore-sheet, and easing it off every five minutes. Luckily I had often done for pleasure what I was now forced to do of necessity, and I got through my duties to the satisfaction of my new masters, though not without some threats of a 'rope's-ending,' which made my blood boil. I kept my temper, however, though I

vowed in my heart that I would yet take a signal vengeance on Dick, and I nursed the hope that at night I might be able to penetrate into Marling's cabin. Alas! at night I was taken below by Dick himself, and again securely lashed into my berth; I saw then how utterly helpless I was, and positively cried with vexation; but yet, so tired was I with the unaccustomed labour I had gone through, that in half an hour I fell asleep, and never awoke till I felt myself shaken by a rude hand, and was once more made conscious of my situation by seeing the repulsive face of Dick bending closely over me.

'Now then! just turn out and read this; and look sharp and give me what's written there for the skipper.'

I read the paper, which contained these words—'Charcoal-plaster—the wounds to be hermetically closed.' I could not understand it.

'You are to get it out of the medicine-chest, for the skipper's cuts—and look smart about it.'

I looked through the chest which the ruffian had brought with him, and picked out the only plaster I could find.

I was immediately sent on deck again; but I could not get the word 'charcoal-plaster' out of my mind. What could it mean? At last it struck me that it must have been intended to convey some meaning to me alone. But what? I puzzled over it again and again. All at once it flashed upon me. I went straight to Dick, who was watching me, and for the first time spoke to him, and asked if I could have my coat.

'Now look here; I'm master here now; and if you want anything, you must touch your hat and call me "sir."'

I repressed my indignation, and flinging my hat on the skylight, repeated my request, though the 'sir' positively stuck in my throat. The wretch grinned horribly.

'That'll do—you can go and get it.' Then turning to the steersman, 'Bill, keep your eye on him; he's going for his coat.'

I went down the companion, at the foot of which, on the port side,

was the door of the sail-cabin, in which were also kept the deck-coats and a small supply of charcoal for lighting the cabin-stove. I managed to fill the pockets of my coat with charcoal, and returning on deck, walked forward again to the windlass.

I was again kept hard at work all day, while the men passed the time smoking and talking in the cabin. At six o'clock they sat down to tea in the fore-castle. Now the fore-castle was warmed by a stove, the smoke of which was carried off by a small chimney which rose just before the foremast. Like all sailors, they had a wholesome hatred of fresh air, and had drawn the hatch over the hatchway leading to the deck; it was not quite close, however, and I could see one of them through the opening. When they had finished their tea, they lit their pipes and lay about on the lockers, talking of their plans in a low tone of voice. Soon one of them went off into a doze, where he lay, and the conversation flagged and very shortly stopped altogether. Now was my opportunity. I had carefully kept over to leeward, so as to keep the sail between me and the steersman; but I now ostentatiously came over to windward as if to look out to sea; then going back again, I rapidly took off my coat and stuffed it noiselessly into the crevice of the hatchway; I had previously taken out all the charcoal, and I now dropped it, bit by bit, down the chimney, and then put on the cover which hung by a chain to the side. Breathlessly I awaited the result. My only fear was that one of them should awake before the fumes of the charcoal began to work. I heard no sound. Now for the first time I saw what I had undertaken, and thought with horror that I might not only stupify, but not improbably kill them. A cold sweat stood on my brow at the thought. I felt inclined to abandon my plan; but I remembered Dick's insolence. I thought of Marling, too, lying bound in his cabin, and I resolved to persevere. For at least ten minutes I waited, and then, withdrawing a corner of the coat, I put my head cautiously into the

opening. A bluish vapour filled the cabin. The man I had knocked down was lying in his berth with a bandage round his head; his hands were clenched, his mouth open, and his tongue protruding. The other three were lying on the lockers, as though dead, and their pipes had fallen on the floor. The door of the cabin was shut. I took all this in at one glance. Replacing the coat, I again went over to windward, in sight of the steersman. I thought with dread that I had already perhaps taken four lives. I could feel my heart beating against my breast, but I ostentatiously looked out ahead and returned leisurely to my place. Once out of his sight, I tore away the coat, pushed open the hatch, and dropped lightly into the cabin. The atmosphere was intolerable. Not one of the four men stirred, though I almost touched them. I caught up a knife, opened the door, and came to Gus Maltre's cabin. It was locked, but there was no time to lose. I put my foot against the door and my back against the opposite bulkhead, and it flew open. Gus was lying bound in his berth, and looked up in alarm. With a gesture I quieted him, and with two strokes of the knife cut the ropes that bound him. He started up, and we turned to leave the cabin, when a shadow obscured the door, and Dick stood before me. He looked stupid and dazed. I thought of my humiliation of the afternoon, and rushing at him, struck him between the eyes. He reeled, but caught my arm. We closed, but he had already lost his balance, and, bracing every nerve in my body, I threw him heavily, and, remembering with savage glee a maxim of the prize-ring, fell on him as heavily as I could. He lay motionless. All this had passed in a moment, and Gus only came to my help in time to find me kneeling on my prostrate foe. I had kept hold of the knife during the struggle; and my passions were so aroused that, rather than let him escape, I should have used it, I am certain. I now gave it to Gus. 'Quick, go and free Burles and Marling!' He disappeared, and in two minutes I had

tied Dick's hands together behind his back, with the very rope from which I had freed Gus, and exactly in the same way as I had been bound myself. The ruffian seemed stupefied, and offered but little resistance. Meantime I heard a scuffling in the fore-castle, and leaving my prisoner, I found Burrles and Gus each securing his man, while the wounded sailor was looking on stupidly from his berth. My first emotion was thankfulness that all the men were alive; and leaving them. I hastened into Marling's cabin. I found him trembling with excitement.

'God bless you, my dear fellow!' said he. 'You understood, then. But you have had a fight for it: is anybody hurt?'

I soon reassured him; and after putting our prisoners, including the steersman, whom Burrles had secured meantime, each into a separate cabin, we held a council. Marling laid all the blame upon Dick, giving as his reason that his Suffolk men were much too dull and heavy to have conceived such a plot, or even to have executed it, except under crafty leadership; and he attributed their acquiescence in Dick's schemes to the fact that, when once the first blow had been struck, they were too stupid to know what else to do than to support him. It seemed not improbable; and it was resolved to release the crew on their promise to return to their duty—and the rather so, that without them we had not enough hands to work the ship. So the three men were brought into the cabin; and when Marling spoke a few words to them, pointing out the serious nature of the crime of which they had been guilty, and promising to overlook it, if they would at once return to their duty, the men hung their heads sheepishly, and at once undertook everything that was required—indeed rather, as I thought, with an air of relief at being out of conspiracy again. So they were released and sent forward, Dick alone being kept bound and confined in Gus's cabin, and him Marling was determined to hand over to justice on the first opportunity.

We all sat up for the rest of the night, talking over the startling events in which we had just borne a part. In the morning, land was announced, which Marling said must be the Isle of Ushant, and he resolved, more especially as the weather looked threatening, to go into Brest and hand over Dick to the authorities there. At twelve o'clock we cast anchor opposite the town, and were boarded by the quarantine officers and the English consul, to whom we made known our situation, and the fact that we had a prisoner to deliver over to the authorities. The consul, a middle-aged man of gentlemanly appearance (who had been made a K.C.B. by the English government for his services in the business of the French Treaty of Commerce), at once sent ashore, with a note to the port admiral, for a file of gendarmes, and informed us that he had had much trouble of late with runaway sailors. 'You see that rakish vessel there, with two funnels?—that is the famous *Florida*. She has been here repairing for some time, and her captain has been using every means, both fair and foul, to fill up the number of his crew, which is much weakened, and I have had nothing else to do but to prosecute runaway sailors, who had been tempted by the high pay offered to desert their own ships for the Confederate cruiser. She has been ready for sea several days, but we are informed that she is awaiting the arrival of the second mate, who has been sent to Liverpool to get men. She will have to wait a long time, for the port admiral has ordered that neither the mate nor the men shall be allowed to join her when they do arrive, and every packet that arrives is searched to see if they are on board.'

The boat with the gendarmes was now seen approaching, and Dick was led on deck with his hands still tied behind him. The consul started on seeing him, drew a paper from his pocket, and glanced rapidly over it. 'Why, that's the very man!' said he. 'The mate of the *Florida*, for certain. See—"height about six feet and a quarter; English; a large scar on

the left side of the forehead"—no doubt of it. A very good idea of his to come in a private yacht. But you were bound for the Mediterranean, you say?"

'Well,' replied Marling, 'I intended at first to come into Brest for fresh provisions, but the northerly wind tempted me past.'

'Yes, yes, I see. If you had come in, I have no doubt you would have lost every man of your crew, as another English yacht did last week.'

One of the men now came up. 'I can tell you something about it, sir. When we rounded Ushant, and he found the governor warn't agoing in, he used to talk to us about the Florida, and said we should get 10*l.* a month pay, and prize-money besides. And then we didn't like going up the Mediterranean; so at last he talked, and talked, and talked us over into taking the ship back; and we was to dodge about Ushant till the Florida come out, and them as liked was to join her. But I'm a married man, and I only joined 'em when it was all done, because I didn't like to leave 'em in the lurch; but I'm glad it's all over, I am.'

Dick had not opened his mouth; but his eye had wandered again and again to the Florida, as though measuring the distance between us. He now advanced to the gangway, and, his hands being tied, the gendarmes stood up to assist him into the boat. He stepped on to the first step of the ladder, then stopped; the gendarmes came close together under him, taking his arms; when suddenly he threw himself straight out, head-foremost, and in an instant disappeared into the sea, carrying

the gendarmes with him, and capsizing the boat. All three disappeared, while the boatman held on by the painter and scrambled up the side of the vessel. Then followed a scene of confusion. The tide was running three knots an hour; and the gendarmes reappeared almost immediately twenty yards astern. Two men now instantly jumped into our own boat, rowed towards them, and pulled them into the boat, more dead than alive. Then these pulled about, looking for Dick. He was nowhere to be seen; his hat alone, floating far down the stream, told the tale. We watched it in silence. It passed close to the Florida, and, strangely enough, was picked up (as I saw through my glass) by one of her crew with a boathook. For some time the men continued the search for Dick; but we all felt that it was useless; for there was little hope even for the strongest swimmer with his hands tied behind him in such a current as that. The consul went ashore to make a statement of the facts, and took with him the gendarmes, who looked very rueful, with their long boots full of water and their clothes wet through.

The Florida left the port that afternoon. The consul came on board the next morning, with a letter addressed to Marling, which he said had been brought back by her pilot. It was without signature, and ran thus: 'Dick has arrived quite safe, and thanks Mr. Maltre for his knife, the gendarmes for his liberty, and the tide for his hat.' Gus Maltre, like an idiot, had left his knife in his cabin.

T. G. B.



LEGISLATORS GOING TO DINNER.

IT is, let us say, a Budget night; or it may be a night for deciding whether Jack the bricklayer and Joe the carpenter shall have the elective franchise; or whether the ancient borough of Mudford shall continue to send members to Parliament. At any rate, let it be a pretty full night in the House of Commons. Mr. Speaker takes the chair, and the reverend chaplain reads prayers about four o'clock. Then, for about an hour or so, business of a formal nature is proceeded with, petitions presented, notices given, &c., which the actual public neither know nor care much about. Next, when tradesmen's families are about going to tea, and City men are going home to dinner, up jumps Mr. Gladstone, and rivets the attention of members present by a speech which all acknowledge to be worth hearing, whether they agree with its sentiments or not. That speech, of two or three hours' length, and others in support of or antagonistic to it, keep poor Mr. Speaker in the chair, with few intervals, until midnight, or possibly two or three hours later. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that our heroic legislators sacrifice themselves in the same way or to the same degree for the benefit of the nation; they do not remain all the evening, listening and talking by turns. None of them, or few of them, are present *ex necessitate*; so long as forty are present, there is a 'House' competent for the transaction of business. It seems to be generally understood that unless a crack speech, begun at five or six o'clock, lasts four or five hours, there shall be a period given up to dummies, drones, bores, hacks, honourable members whom no one wishes to hear, but who are glad to see their own names in the newspapers next day. It is known that some of the tip-top men mean to speak by-and-by, and arrangements are made to prevent a count-out until that happy time arrives. Under such circumstances it is that the House is often

very empty from about half-past seven till half-past nine. The innocent public who noticed that more than six hundred members were in the House at midnight on the famous 18th of June last, and that the House had begun to sit at four o'clock, may have supposed that the legislators were pinned to their benches all the time. Happy ignorance! There were, very likely, at eight o'clock, barely enough present to make up the necessary quorum of forty. Whither, then, do these honourable members betake themselves at the dull intervals? Some go home to Belgravia or Mayfair, dine alone or with their families, and return to the House when nature has been reinvigorated. Some wend their way to their clubs in Pall Mall or St. James's Street, where political gossip and delicate viands can be indulged in simultaneously, and speculations made touching the result of the forthcoming division. A Hansom cab will bring any one of these senatorial gentlemen back to the House in good time. But there are many members who, experiencing the usual sharpening of appetite as eight o'clock approaches, do nevertheless feel disinclined to depart from the precincts of the House. If they could obtain what is needed for their present wants without the expenditure of much time, thought, trouble, or money, so much the better—especially if their wants are really simple and easily satisfied.

Now this is the clue to the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms of the House of Commons, departments which figure somewhat mysteriously in the Blue Books, but yet not exactly in a legislative sort of way. We sometimes read of a committee to manage this matter, without gaining a very clear insight as to the nature of the duties consigned to the committee's keeping. It appears that, in those remote days when four o'clock was first appointed as the meeting hour of the House of

Commons, honourable members were accustomed to dine at two or three, and then they could digest their politics and their dinners at the same time. When, however, in process of time, the prandial hour was postponed to four or five, six or seven, eight or nine o'clock (perhaps it will be midnight with the next generation!), some other arrangement became necessary; and then the curious medley of plans originated which has existed ever since. One Mr. Bellamy was permitted to open a refreshment room under the roof of St. Stephen's, and to sell, not complete dinners, but plainer viands. He charged half-a-crown for cold meat and salad, three-and-sixpence for hot steaks or chops (cooked in the room); but he had seldom more than twelve diners a day. After the Reform Bill of 1832, Bellamy's became more frequented; and when the old buildings were burned down, the late Sir Charles Barry included among the rooms of his magnificent but inconvenient new structure a kitchen, a dining-room, and a tea-room, with the necessary adjuncts of cellars, sculleries, pantries, and the like. Then, too, new arrangements were made concerning the lessee, manager, steward, host, or keeper of this department—call him which we may, according as he is to be regarded as a master tradesman or a servant. A curious compromise was made. All the necessary fittings were supplied to him by the House, even to a duster or a knife-cloth; he supplied the eatables and drinkables; his charges were placed under legislation; and the House provided him with a certain annual sum to assist in paying the wages of servants and waiters. His profits on the consumable articles were supposed to be sufficient to defray all the necessary costs.

While these arrangements were gradually assuming form and system, a terrible outburst of legislative indignation took place. The Serjeant-at-Arms and the Lord Great Chamberlain almost came to blows about a ginger-beer and orange stall! Mr. Roebuck rose one evening in the House of Commons, and asked the

chairman of the Kitchen and Refreshment Room Committee 'why a person who had been permitted to sell refreshments in the central hall had been suddenly denied that privilege. Then the facts came out. It appears that the Lord Great Chamberlain's secretary wrote to the stall-keeper, one Mr. Lucas, and informed him that a stall could no longer be permitted in so sacred a place. Whereupon the stall-keeper applied to the Serjeant-at-Arms, representative of the majesty of the House; and then ensued an official correspondence between Lord Willoughby d'Eresby as Lord Great Chamberlain, and Lord Charles Russell as Serjeant-at-Arms, each courteous to the other, but each firm. The committee urged upon the House the necessity of maintaining its privileges; and Mr. Roebuck asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the House was to 'put up with the determination of that important personage the Lord Great Chamberlain?' 'Are we,' he added, 'after having determined that certain refreshments should be sold in that hall, upon the command and upon the most impertinent interference of that functionary, to be prevented from having what I believe we have a perfect right to have—our own refreshments in our own house?' Ay, there's the rub; is it their own house, belonging to the representatives of the people; or is it part of the Palace of Westminster, belonging to the state trappings of the Crown? The ministers not deeming it prudent that a collision should arise on so trifling a matter, induced the court functionary to yield.

This little episode over, we return to the more important Kitchen and Refreshment Room. A standing committee was appointed in 1848, to superintend this gastronomic subject; and then it was that soup and fish were permitted to be introduced among the good things obtainable at Bellamy's. The great Bellamy was in due time gathered to his fathers, and was succeeded by another; but his successor did not give satisfaction. Then Gunter was asked, and

Staples, and other notables in the restaurant line; but somehow or other they 'didn't seem to see it.' Eventually the steward of one of the West End clubs was appointed in an office curiously compounded of master and servant. The committee from time to time recommended changes in the rooms, to increase the comfort of honourable legislators. As years went on, the members complained that they were not well served; while the manager complained that he was not sufficiently paid. The House provided plate, linen, glass, china, gas, candles, coals, and kitchen utensils; and, out of a Fee Fund belonging to the House, the manager was paid 300*l.* a year to aid in maintaining his staff of subordinates. The rooms were found to be too small to dine the members who applied. The committee, in 1863, consulted the Board of Works, and the Board consulted Mr. E. M. Barry. Then Mr. Cubitt, one of the members of the committee, assisted Mr. Barry in concocting a scheme. To lengthen the kitchen eight feet, and the dining-room eight feet, they got up an estimate of four thousand pounds, good and lawful money. The question arose, whether our national cashier would like to ask the House of Commons for such a sum for such a purpose. The difficulties of the manager were undoubtedly considerable, owing to the uncertainty in the number of members who would honour him with their company to dinner each day. In a letter to the committee, he said:—'The dining-room of the House cannot be compared with any other establishment in the metropolis. I allude more particularly to the clubs, on which model I had the honour of first introducing the manner of serving dinners in the dining-room of the House. It has always been the wish of the committee, constantly expressed to members, that, for their own comfort and the better regulation of the dining-room, they should order their dinner a short time before being required; but this has been found impracticable, as members themselves cannot tell when they may have the opportunity of

dining. In consequence of this uncertainty, and at the end of an important speech or debate, every member who wishes to dine proceeds immediately to the dining-room; and hence arises great confusion. I consider that no reasonable number of servants will be able to supply the immediate wants of members on such occasions. But even these are only occasional instances; and it has frequently happened that treble the number of a small day's business have dined with much greater facility and comfort when members have come in at regular intervals, than when the smaller number have come in unexpectedly and all at the same moment. It is the numbers at once that make the confusion; no notice, no intimation, but everything is expected to be ready, then and there, even though nothing has been doing for an hour. During the ten years I have held my appointment, I have never once been short of supply; and many members, during last session, were witnesses to my plentiful supply in preparing for a hundred and fifty or more, and only ten or twelve dining.'

Now think what a torment this must be to a purveyor and his cook! Suppose a lady to give a dinner-party. The cook is told how many are to be the guests, and what are to be the good things provided. But here, at the House of Commons, no one knows beforehand how many will dine; nor is it known, except in a few cases, which of the diners will choose hot or cold, soup or fish, poultry or game, joint or entrées, sweets or salads. Is not this almost more than flesh and blood (of cook) can bear? On one day, during a great debate on national expenditure, a hundred and forty members dined at the House; on a Maynooth debate evening, a hundred and nine; whereas on a third evening, when another great debate was expected, the House rose early, through a count-out, and the purveyor had only twenty-six to partake of his abundantly-supplied viands. On other days, when good assemblages were confidently reck-

oned on, the exigencies of debate sent down only twenty, or even sixteen, to dinner. The average diners three years ago was about sixty per day on four days in the week, Wednesday and Saturday being *non dies*, so far as concerns dining at the House.

A very amusing discussion took place in the Commons in 1863, between those who approved and those who condemned the proposed expenditure of four thousand pounds for enlarging this legislative restaurant. We may as well, perhaps, veil the real names of the speakers. Mr. A— asked the Chairman of the Committee what he was going to do in the matter; the Chairman asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *he* was going to do; and the Chancellor replied that he could not afford the money. On another evening the Chairman moved a formal resolution sanctioning the proposed expenditure for the proposed purpose. Mr. B— opposed it, because the additional buildings would encroach on one of the courtyards. Mr. C— thought that what was wanted was better dinners, not more room. Mr. D— feared an attempt was being made to render the feasting *too good*; if the dinners were simpler, they would be better served. Col. E— (honourable and gallant) declared it to be a shame that they should herd together and eat together like pigs; they ought to have a good and proper dining-room. Mr. F— declared that he would willingly dine there often, if he could only get something fit to eat. Sir G— and Mr. H— thought that the purveyor was deserving of aid and compassion in his perplexities. Mr. I— threatened honourable members that if they did not pass the resolution they would get no dinner at all. Viscount J— said that whereas formerly members only went to Belamy's to get a chop, now so many dined there that it had become the greatest dining-club in London. Lord K— expressed a belief that no possible plan could render it a comfortable dining-room, owing to the uncertainty so often adverted to; and that it would be better to give

up the idea of making a club of the House of Commons. Mr. L— stated that if the purveyor had an extra two hundred a year he would hire more waiters, and do his best in the present room. Sir M— was sarcastically severe on honourable members—'Do you want your *washing* done also at the public expense?' They ought, he urged, to make a bun or a biscuit suffice, else it would be the first step towards the system of paying members. Mr. N— (a great brewer) suggested that as they were all lazy between seven and nine o'clock, it would be better to dine there than to go elsewhere. An old member, Mr. O—, remembered that the speeches in those two critical hours were better in Belamy's time than now, when 'there is a bill of fare in which something like a French dinner is attempted.' If the dinners were *very good*, the House would be emptier than ever. Sir P— said that the fault is in the sculleries, which are not well fitted up. Mr. Q— thought that if the meat was better, everything would be better. The Chief Commissioner of Works doubted the prudence of patching up any additional buildings, and proposed simply a re-arrangement of tables. And so, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gladstone—it is alleged by those who watch him on a busy evening—takes very little sips out of a very little phial, and is popularly supposed never to eat at all) would not give any money out of the public purse, the whole discussion dropped; and the dining-room is at the present day just as large (or as small) as it was then.

About that period Mr. X—, the manager, resigned, because the stipend was too small; Mr. Y— was appointed; he resigned, and Mr. Z— was appointed; and it became a problem which of the three unknown quantities, X—, Y—, Z—, would turn up valuable in the end. The Committee determined that henceforth the manager should not supply the wine; and as the profit on this wine had been one of the chief matters looked forward to by the manager, that functionary was sorely

disappointed. As a partial compensation he was appointed wine butler, with a small allowance per bottle under the name of 'corkage,' varying according to the quality and price of the wine. When the manager wanted any odds and ends for the kitchen or dining-room, he asked the Committee, and the Committee asked the Serjeant-at-Arms, and the Serjeant-at-Arms asked the Board of Works; and then the honourable board sent dishes, covers, table-cloths, wine-coolers, glass, china, salt spoons, a mangle, rubbers, dusters, ironmongery, a Chubb's lock for the wine-cellar, matting, carpeting, a washing-machine, linen-presses, a dripping-pan, a meat-stand, soap boxes, towel-rollers, a knife-cleaning machine, brushes, brooms, pots, and pans. They were not at all proud, the House of Commons and the Board of Works and Public Buildings;—they did not deem Molly the scullery-maid beneath their notice.

The reader may perhaps like to know what are the prices paid by our right honourable, honourable and gallant, honourable and learned, and simply honourable members, for the comestibles and beverages which are to afford sustentation to exhausted energies. Are the prices higher or lower than those paid by club people and other people? The Committee reformed the tariff in 1864, and it does not seem to have undergone any considerable change since. Is soup wanted? There are four or five kinds at one shilling each, or eightpence the 'half portion.' If a plain man requires a plain mutton-chop, he pays ninepence, or eighteenpence for a rump-steak. Should a grilled bone of beef or mutton prove to be tempting, eighteenpence is charged for it; and the same for the leg of a fowl or a slice of game pie. Let plain John Bull want a plain joint of roast beef, he pays the like sum of eighteenpence; and a similar charge is made for grilled ham and eggs—probably what working people call eggs and bacon. Cold meat and potatoes may be indulged in for one shilling. Oysters were set down, two years ago, at sixpence the half-dozen; but

'prime natives' are high in the market just now, and probably legislative Dandos have to pay in fair proportion. A single glass of beer or ale is threepence; bread and cheese sixpence; fish, entrées, patés, &c., are left to be charged according to circumstances, perhaps on the ground that if legislators *will* make a set dinner under the legislative roof, they ought to pay liberally. In the tea-room (the above-named articles being served in the dining-room) a large cup of tea or coffee may be had for sixpence, and one of smaller dimensions for fourpence; but if the luxury of cream be added, fifty per cent. of extra charge is made. If what ladies call 'a tea' is served—that is, a teapot or coffee-pot well filled, with all the appurtenances of milk and sugar, bread and butter or toast—the charge is one shilling; really a very moderate cost, only a little ahead of the conventional 'tea and shrimps' charge at Gravesend to Sunday and Monday excursionists. Of course eggs or ham or a rasher with the tea are regarded as a luxury to be paid for in addition. The item 'table' is charged sixpence before four o'clock, one shilling afterwards, under the rational theory that a gentleman at luncheon gives less trouble than a gentleman at dinner. An honourable member, a short time ago, raised a mutiny against a charge of fifteenpence for one mutton-chop and 'table;' whereupon a command was issued from headquarters that one shilling should be deemed sufficient payment for this amount of luxury. Lord Robert Montague drew up a paper, and presented it to the Committee, containing a synopsis of the charges made at ten of the principal West End clubs, with a view of furnishing a standard for the House of Commons refreshment rooms. Taking them one with another, the present legislative comestibles seem to conform pretty nearly to an average tariff. An Athenæum dinner of soup, fish, and entrées, is set down at three shillings; a Conservative dinner of the same kind at four shillings; while a more com-

plete dinner at the Reform and the Conservative figures at seven to ten shillings. Other items vary; but the House of Commons takes a sort of middle position.

The latest emanation of wisdom from the Refreshment Committee, of the month of May in the present year, tells the world that the dining-rooms are still badly ventilated, inconvenient, and too small for the requirements of the House; that the kitchen and its adjuncts are also too small; that the new rooms really ought to be built according to the plans proposed by Mr. Barry three years ago; that more than one hundred members had signed a paper expressive of their opinions to this effect; that the average diners per day this session have been thirty more than the tables can accommodate at one time; that on one particular day no fewer than

two hundred and thirty-nine dined there; and that, as most of them wish to dine nearly at one time, the confusion and discomfort at such times are excessive. Among the proceedings of the Committee we further find that some of the sherry and 'la rose' and 'cos d'Estournel' did not meet with legislative approbation; that the wine merchants were requested to supply better at the same price; that a drunken man, sent by one of the wine-merchants to remove and change some wine, stole a rope and pulley 'belonging to the House;' and that, in consequence of the great increase in the number of diners, the Serjeant-at-Arms was requested to apply to the Office of Works for 'forty dozen table napkins, twelve dozen glass cloths, and twelve dozen coarse cloths.'

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THE BURGLARY AT FAUSTEL EVERSLEIGH.

‘WELL, Biggs, what is the matter? You look important this morning.’

Biggs swelled in majestic silence, deposited the muffin-dish on the table with as near an approach to emphasis as he dared, and was in the act of retreating, when the young lady standing at one of the open windows looked up from her newspaper to say—

‘Aunt Dora, these burglaries are becoming quite alarming; they are travelling in our direction, I think, too; there was one at Woodthorpe

only three nights ago—close to us, you know—’

The temptation to cap this piece of news quite overcame Mr. Biggs’ wounded dignity, and he opened his lips and spoke.

‘And one, Miss Lucy, at Willow Lodge last night, for the postman brought the news this morning with the letters.’

‘Dear, dear!’ said Mrs. Selwyn. ‘I hope poor Miss Jenkins and Miss Araminta came to no harm.’

‘The family, ma’am, was not molested,’ answered Biggs with solemn-

nity, 'but everything the villains could lay hands on was carried off, and no traces of them hasn't been discovered up to the present moment!'

'Really, Aunt Dora, it is serious. You know we are two lone women as well as Miss Jenkins and her sister. Suppose they take a fancy to visit us next?'

'Well, Lucy, what can I do? Is the case urgent enough for me to write over to the barracks, and ask Colonel Patteson to send us an agreeable captain and lieutenant, with a party of soldiers warranted sober and not given to flirting, to garrison poor old Eversleigh for a while?'

'I know you are as brave as a lion, auntie dear, but still I think this is not a laughing matter. What could you or I do — or even Biggs——'

'The very fust thing these rascals does, Miss Lucy, when they get into a house, is to lock the men servants, if there is any, into their rooms; so that, you see——'

'Well, well, Biggs, that would be of the less consequence, as I am sure if they omitted to turn the key on you, you would do it on yourself,' said Mrs. Selwyn with a twinkle in her eyes that merged into a laugh as Biggs retreated. 'There, Lucy,' she went on, 'don't look so serious, and I will have all the plate packed up to-day and sent in a most ostentatious manner to my bankers, if that will give you peace of mind.'

Miss Lucy Gresham continued to discuss her breakfast with a very half-satisfied look on her pretty face, which Mrs. Selwyn observing went on—

'And I'll tell you what I can do as well, if that is not precaution enough. You remember Jack Eversleigh? he is at home now on leave, and I'll write him a line to come down here for a week or two, with his "long sword," revolvers, and all his "bold dragoon" paraphernalia, and mount guard over two unprotected females. It will be quite in Jack's way, or would have been once upon a time. You have not forgotten Jack?'

'I don't remember him very

well,' answered Miss Lucy, bestowing a good deal of attention on her breakfast-cup. 'Hasn't he turned out very wild? Mary Selden told me something of that sort, I think.'

"Give a dog a bad name, and hang him," my dear. It has always been the fashion in Jack's family to give the lad credit for being everything he ought not to be, and so really to make him some things he would not otherwise have been. I don't know exactly what amount, or what kind of iniquity is comprehended in the word "wild;" it is certain Jack has always been called a scapegrace; it is equally certain that I believe a truer gentleman, or kinder heart, does not bear her Majesty's commission to-day!'

Mrs. Selwyn's eyes sparkled, and her fair old cheek coloured, as she spoke. Childless herself, she was very fond of her late husband's favourite nephew John Eversleigh, and had fought on the lad's side in many a pitched battle with prim aunts and austere father. And it must be owned that Jack was one of those who always give their friends enough to do in this way. Even Mrs. Selwyn, with all her fondness for him, could not deny that, thought Lucy Gresham, as after breakfast she wended her way down the shady avenue, on one of her accustomed errands of goodwill and kindness to some of their poorer neighbours, with that invitation and the question of Jack's acceptance of the same, a great deal more present to her mind than she would have cared to own. She would have liked to believe that Jack Eversleigh was no worse than Aunt Dora thought him; she remembered quite well seeing him come to church with the Seldens once when he was staying with them last year, and she remembered, too, with a sigh, how he had certainly gone to sleep on that very occasion, when dear Mr. Lillydew's sermon was only ever such a little over the hour. Mary Selden had said he was 'wild,' and George Selden, who ought surely to know, being in the same regiment, had talked of Jack's being always 'hard-up,' whatever that might mean, and

so-and-so—and Lucy sighed: she would have preferred to think her old playfellow was not utterly reprobate, if she had been able.

It was very hard to look at him, and yet hold to that opinion, Lucy was thinking, a day or two afterwards, as she sat demurely silent near one of the windows, and listened to the merry talk that was going on between Mrs. Selwyn and Captain Eversleigh, newly arrived. Jack seemed mightily amused and interested on hearing in what capacity he was invited, and on the whole impressed Miss Gresham with the conviction that he would be rather disappointed if no burglar afforded him any means of exercising his predilection for strife and violence during his stay.

With these thoughts in her mind, it is not wonderful that Lucy's manner towards the object of them was shy and constrained to the last degree. Haughty or repellant she could not be, nature not having provided her with that double-edged weapon called 'a spirit,' but only a gentle heart that would fain have had kind and loving thoughts of all the world, and believed the best of every man, woman, or child with whom she came into contact. In theory, you see, poor Lucy had shaken her head and sighed over the iniquity of the world at large; but in practice, it was her feminine habit to take those with whom she came into actual contact much as they appeared, or professed themselves to be—not seldom, indeed, in her innocent and tender imaginings crediting them with virtues which I am afraid they had no claim to, out of that gentle region.

And the shyness and constraint did not deter Jack in the least from setting himself to restore, at the very first opportunity, something of the old familiar relations between himself and his little companion of long ago. He thought them both rather pretty than otherwise; but by that time Mr. Jack had privately arrived at the conviction, too, that Miss Gresham possessed the largest, softest, most innocent eyes, and the loveliest wild-rose complexion, he

had ever seen. Fashionable girls, fast girls, flirting girls, merry, outspoken, frank girls, Jack knew by scores, and had very likely waltzed, hunted, and talked nonsense by the mile, to very nearly the same number; a little tender, unsophisticated, ignorant girl, who shook her head at the opera, balls, and cigar-smoking generally, and yet who cried real, heartfelt tears over the capture of that incorrigible poacher and vagabond, Downy Dick, was something new and piquante; and, accordingly, he set himself to the task of cultivating amicable relations with Lucy Gresham, with a characteristic inability to admit the idea of failure, that must needs have gone far to ensure success, even if Lucy had been other than she was.

Being what she was, it is not wonderful that after only two or three days' experience of Jack's pleasant qualities as a companion, in the quiet home-life of the old manor-house, Lucy had gone so far as to think that a gentleman might hunt and even smoke without being utterly reprobate; and that whatever might be comprehended in the vague term of being 'hard-up,' it could not be anything very bad, and yet applied with truth to John Eversleigh. Simple faith of a guileless little heart! only it was a pity, you see, that it should have been grounded so very much on the fact of Jack's having handsome dark eyes and a pleasant smile that was always ready.

And in that companionship the days seemed to glide away like dreams, happy dreams, all too fleet in the passing. Ah! those long, sauntering walks through bright summer days, in which Jack's sportsman-like habit of observation, and upbringing in the vigorous outdoor life of an English gentleman, made him quick to see and able to point out to the little town-bred damsel a thousand natural beauties and things of interest, which she would have passed by; those rides over breezy downs, among sweet green lanes and shadowy woodland paths, where wood-doves cooed in the happy silence, and squirrels

scrambled higher among the scented pines, to look down with bright inquisitive eyes upon the sleek horses and their riders, as they wound along the slender pathways, with gentle footfalls all muffled and made tranquil by the last year's leaves that lay so thickly there. Ah! days, happy in the coming—in the passing—and yet destined to bear such a cruel sting when memory of them was all that was left!

As to the burglars, for whose expected incursions Captain Eversleigh's visit had been a preparation, I am inclined to think that remembrance of them retreated very much into the background, though, for the first night or two, Jack diligently made tremendous and complicated arrangements for their reception in the way of revolvers, life-preservers, &c., &c. Stout-hearted old Mrs. Selwyn had never entertained any fears; Lucy somehow forgot hers in pleasanter things; and when, one night, just before retiring to bed, Aunt Dora produced from her pocket-book a packet of bank-notes, making an amount of nearly two hundred pounds, which she had received that day, and had delayed, for some reason or other, driving over to Marley to pay into her bankers, it was only Jack who looked somewhat grave over the imprudence.

'It's what Biggs would call a downright tempting of Providence, Aunt Dolly,' he said, in concluding his remonstrance.

'Biggs is such an arrant coward that, I declare, if I could see my way to getting up an impromptu burglary for his sole benefit, I'm perfectly sure I should not be able to resist the temptation,' remarked the old lady, as she put away the notes in a little cabinet of Japanese workmanship, of which the key was duly taken out and deposited for security, with true feminine ideas of the same, under the family Bible, which lay on its carved oaken stand in a recess.

The sun was streaming brightly upon Lucy's closed eyes the next morning, when she opened them with a start to find Aunt Dora standing by her bed-side, looking a

little disturbed, and much graver than her pleasant wont.

'My coming in did not wake you, Lucy,' she said; 'so I suppose it is not to be expected that you should have heard anything of what took place last night, which was what I came to ask you.'

'Took place last night, Aunt Dora!' repeated Lucy, starting up. 'Why—but what were you going to say?'

'Only that it seems the house was really broken into last night, and the notes I left in the Japan cabinet in the tent-room taken, after all. Jack is half-wild to think that he should have played the watch-dog so inefficiently. He never heard a sound, he says, and they must have passed his door as well as yours. But, Lucy, my child, don't look so terribly white and scared! No one was murdered in their beds this time; and Biggs was not even locked into his room, except by himself.'

'Are you sure the money is gone? Oh! Aunt Dora, perhaps it's a mistake—a joke!' said Lucy, breathlessly, and with an inconsequence that made Mrs. Selwyn look a little impatient.

'I cannot perceive the joke of losing nearly two hundred pounds; and, as for mistake, the money has been carried off—that's very certain. When Biggs came upstairs this morning he found the window in the little vestibule wide open. He told Martha, who came to me, and I went straight to the tent-room, and found the cabinet wide open and the money gone. It had been opened with the key, too, for that was in the lock. And you never heard anything, Lucy?'

'Something woke me once—but what does Captain Eversleigh say—what does he think?'

'Say—why, that I ought not to have kept the money in the house: which is only true, as I dare say these light-fingered gentlemen who have been honouring the neighbourhood lately, knew quite well that yesterday was rent-day; and, as for his thoughts, he has ridden over to Marley post-haste to share them with the police. But I dare say

nothing will come of that, for these people have not been detected in any one instance as yet. There, Lucy, I am sorry to have frightened the blood out of your cheeks; make haste with your toilet and come to breakfast, my dear—you look as if you wanted it, and we'll not wait for Jack.'

But half an hour afterwards Lucy carried the same shocked white face into the breakfast-parlour with which she had listened to these tidings; and though Mrs. Selwyn laughed, and said that the occasion was not worth anything so tragic, somehow that look never faded out of Lucy's face, but seemed to deepen as the day wore on.

Then ensued days of unwonted stir and bustle at quiet old Faustel Eversleigh; a great coming and going of members of the police force from Marley; much communing with the same on the part of Captain Eversleigh, who entered into the search for traces of the thieves with a great deal of energy and spirit, and a perfect influx of visitors to sympathize and condole. Energy and spirit were expended in vain, however, as far as the desired purpose was concerned. There was, absolutely, no clue, as it seemed; and when two or three days had gone over, and wary detectives had prowled and poked over every corner of the old house, inside and out,—had asked numberless questions of every member of the household, without, as Lucy fancied, seeming to pay much attention to the answers (that same fancy enabled her to reply to those that fell to her share with a great deal more ease than she had thought possible beforehand) they seemed as far off as ever.

Mrs. Selwyn declared she would rather lose the same amount of money three times told, than go to the same fuss and bother to recover it; implored her nephew to let the search drop, and take no further steps in the matter; which Captain Eversleigh was, perforce, obliged to do, very unwillingly, as he said, 'seeing that his leave was within a day or two of its expiry, and he must deprive his aunt of his pre-

sence, just at the very time he should have liked to think himself wanted.'

There was a soft undertone in Jack's voice when he made this remark, and he glanced as he spoke towards that silent figure, sitting in the farthest of the deep old windows with the gentle evening light falling softly on its bending head. Amidst all the bustle and occupation of the last few days Jack had not forgotten to notice how pale and silent Lucy Gresham had been, nor how the innocent brown eyes had worn a scared and bewildered look very foreign to their usual tranquil tenderness.

'It was natural enough, that—she was such a gentle, tender little thing—not a bit stout-hearted, nor strong-minded (none the less charming for the want, though), and, of course, her nerves had been shaken by what had happened.'

Captain Eversleigh was thinking something like this, as he walked over towards the window where Lucy had sat silent so long, meaning, when he reached her, to say something soothing and sympathizing, only, startled and confounded by the look that Lucy turned upon him for an instant, as he did so, that he drew back involuntarily with—

'For Heaven's sake! what can be the matter, Lucy?'

There was no answer: she had turned her face away again still more closely to the window, so that it was quite hidden; but he saw instead the strong tension of the clasp in which the hands lying in her lap were pressed together. Jack was very much amazed, but he was very much moved, too. He threw a hasty glance over his shoulder to where Aunt Dora was reclining in her lounging-chair, her back conveniently towards them, then stooped down very nearly to that averted face, while he said—almost as tenderly as he felt at the instant—

'Tell me what is wrong, Lucy. Ah! if you knew——'

But that beginning was destined to remain uncompleted; for Lucy Gresham suddenly rose out of her

seat, upright as a dart, white as a ghost, serene and sad as an accusing angel.

'If I knew! I do know. And now that you know I do—never, never speak to me again—for that I cannot bear—and be silent!' and before Captain Eversleigh could recover from his pause of petrified astonishment Miss Gresham turned her back on him and fled from the room.

She did not appear at breakfast the next morning—the last breakfast that Jack Eversleigh would partake of for some time to come under Aunt Dora's roof. Lucy had a headache, Mrs. Selwyn explained, and begged to be excused; which intelligence Jack heard without remark, and was altogether during the progress of the meal so absent and unlike himself, that Aunt Dora was privately imagining that there was a reason why he should be more sorry to say 'good-bye' to Faustel Eversleigh this time than had existed on former occasions.

'Well, well,' thought the kind old lady, 'and if Jack and Lucy have taken a fancy to one another, I don't know that either could do better; and for my part I think I would ask nothing better than that the children should marry and settle down here with me, as long as I live. I have always liked to think of Jack's having the old place when I am gone, and Lucy would make the dearest little wife in the world. I do think that Jack is smitten—and she—well, well——'

And while the old lady was dreaming of love and marriage, and dark old houses growing all humanly warm and bright in the light of the sweet story that was first told in Eden, Captain Eversleigh was indignantly intent upon these two questions:—

'What the deuce could Lucy Gresham mean? What the deuce does she know?'

There was no opportunity of propounding them to Miss Gresham herself, supposing that Captain Eversleigh desired it, for up to the last minute of his stay no Lucy was visible. So his farewells had only to be made to Aunt Dora when the

time arrived. They were very hearty and affectionate, like the feeling that subsisted between the two, and when Mrs. Selwyn turned in again from the portico where she had stood to see Jack drive off, she felt as if the silent house had lost something that made it a pleasant home, in that cheerful, manly presence.

It had lost something else, too, as it very soon appeared; for this pale, silent Lucy of the days and weeks succeeding Captain Eversleigh's departure was as unlike the cheerful little maiden of days gone, as anything that could well be imagined. Mrs. Selwyn's heart misgave her when she saw the girl going listlessly about her little every-day duties with that kind of laborious patience and conscientiousness so sadly indicative of the 'letter' without the 'spirit,' and noticed the nervous tremor in which she was apt to be thrown by such slight things as the sudden opening of a door, a quick footstep, or an unexpected address. She saw these things with a little thrill of terror, remembering how slight a foundation her fancy that Jack Eversleigh cared for Lucy Gresham had been built upon, and devoutly wished a dozen times a day, that she had never brought the two together, nor meddled with such a doubtful matter as match-making.

As to the lost money and the suspected burglary, that seemed a subject tabooed by both ladies with mutual consent, though not so readily allowed to drop by chance visitors, with whom a topic of conversation during the orthodox twenty minutes was too precious to be parted with lightly.

'Dear me!' said a lady, one morning, after the circumstances of the robbery had been succinctly detailed to her by Mrs. Selwyn, in answer to her questions. 'Did it never occur to you to suspect any one in the house, my dear Mrs. Selwyn?'

'Not to me, certainly,' answered Mrs. Selwyn, with a disturbed glance over at Lucy, who had moved suddenly in her chair; 'for I have no servant, fortunately, whose

trustworthiness has not been proved.'

'That is fortunate indeed—for them,' returned the lady; 'but really, I think I should not be very easy myself under the circumstances. Does it not strike you as suspicious, for instance, that nothing but the money should have been taken, or that the thief should have known so exactly where to put his hand upon it?'

'I don't think I should have thought so myself,' answered the old lady, looking very fidgetty, 'but then I knew there was really little but the money to take. I had sent all the plate we don't use to my bankers some time before, and, after my nephew came down, Biggs always carried the rest into his room every night. As for the fact of the thieves knowing where to find the money, there was nothing very wonderful about that; no doubt the house had been watched; and, as we all remembered afterwards, the windows of the room from which it was taken were wide open, and the lights burning, when I locked it into the cabinet. From that clump of rhododendrons yonder every movement of those in the room could have been seen perfectly well.'

'Ah! true—well, it is very pleasant to have such confidence in those about us. And when may we hope to see Captain Eversleigh again?'

'He writes me that there is some chance of his being quartered with a detachment at Marley for a while, a piece of very unhopèd-for good news.'

The conversation changed; but when the visitor had been gone some minutes, Mrs. Selwyn broke the silence that had lasted since then by saying—

'I am sorry that you should have heard Mrs. Sandell's charitable surmises, Lucy dear, Jack begged me not to let you know that such an idea had ever been started. He thought that, being such a timid little thing, it would only add to your uneasiness, perhaps.'

'Who first entertained such an idea?' inquired Lucy, faintly.

'The detective who came over first,

suggested it, I think, to Jack, who imparted it to me; but of course I could not entertain it for a moment. Biggs certainly knew I had the money in the house; but surely the fidelity of twenty years——'

Mrs. Selwyn paused a little absently, and Lucy's voice broke passionately into the silence.

'Oh! Aunt Dora! don't suspect any one! least of all, poor, good old Biggs. He never took the money! never! never! Captain Eversleigh must be sure of that; and oh! surely he would never let you think so for one instant; it would be too cruel! too wicked!'

'Why, Lucy!' said Mrs. Selwyn, looking at the girl's flushed face in some wonder. 'Biggs ought to be very much obliged to you for your championship, only it is a pity there should be no more call for it. As for Jack's entertaining such a suspicion, he pooh-poohed it from the very first; so there is no occasion for all that indignation, my dear. I am not vindictive, I hope,' Mrs. Selwyn went on, after a little pause, 'but I would give the money over again to have the real thief brought to light, there is something so painful in the atmosphere of doubt and suspicion that surrounds an undiscovered crime. Don't let us talk any more of it, Lucy, we have been wise in ignoring it hitherto. Have Daisy saddled, and go for a canter over the Downs, my dear; there is a fresh wind blowing that will put all megrims to flight, I dare say.'

But instead of ordering Daisy to be saddled, Lucy put on her hat and mantle, and taking her solitary way out into the grounds, wandered to a spot at some distance from the house, where a pretty little brown river stole through banks all picturesquely broken and rugged, singing as it went, with a happy music to which the girl had unconsciously set dreams as gentle and glad, many and many a time in the bright summer days that were gone. Thoughts of them came back to her now, perhaps, all strangely and sadly mingled with the altered present; and throwing her arms forward against the moss-grown trunk of one of the old trees bending over

the little river, Lucy hid her face upon them and wept passionate, despairing tears, never known before by those gentle eyes.

‘What ought I to do? What is right? What is best?’ she thought, with that dreadful, agonizing struggle to reconcile duty and expediency that is apt to beset those whose conscience is so tender, and whose heart so gentle as poor Lucy’s. ‘It would break Aunt Dora’s heart if it came to light; and mine is breaking now, I think. What shall I do?’

But no answer came to that sad, appealing cry; the wind sighed among the trees overhead, and the leaves came shivering down at the sound, and were borne silently away on the brown water, for it was summer no longer; and never, surely, was autumn so cheerless before, Lucy thought. But joy and sadness are in the eyes which look and the ears which listen, and the fairest sunshine would have been clouded just now to Lucy Gresham’s.

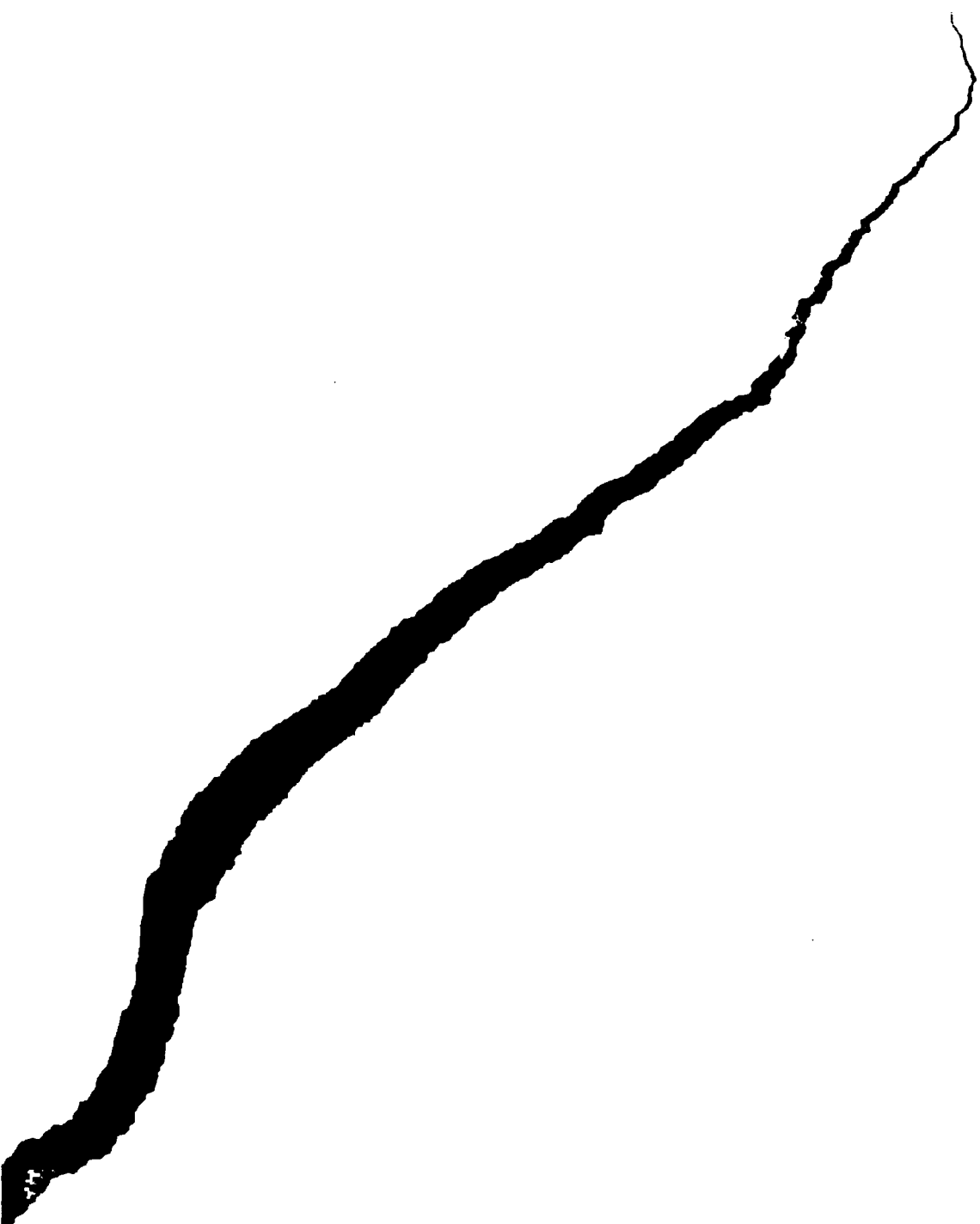
In fact, Lucy’s eyes had seen nothing very clearly since that night, now many weeks ago, when the bank-notes were stolen from the Japanese cabinet in the tent-room; or, at least, everything since then was distorted in the light of the utterly confounding sight they had witnessed on that occasion.

It was all before her now, as she sat with hidden face and hands clasped before her eyes, for whether poor Lucy shut her eyes or opened them, they only seemed to serve her as long as she looked at one thing.

Yes; it was all before her now. How, on that horrible night, she had started from a light sleep and a happy dream, to listen breathlessly to a sound in the corridor outside her door—a quiet, muffled footfall passing stealthily along, and dying away in the distance. How, when it had quite gone—had been gone minutes indeed—she had sprung from her bed, in fear that lent her for the instant all the hardihood of courage, intending to fly into Aunt Dora’s room; and how, as she opened the door, she saw with her own eyes—ah! heaven, yes—in the broad summer moonlight that lit up all the corridor from end to end

with its solemn splendour, John Eversleigh—kind Aunt Dora’s dearly-loved nephew—coming out of the tent-room, with the little fanciful ivory-clasped box that held the bank-notes in his hand! How, in the wonder, the terror, the incredulity with which she looked on this sight, she had shrunk back into the room, and had listened to that muffled footfall coming quietly back past her door, past Aunt Dora’s, till it died away again out of the corridor. Then the poor child had crept back into her bed, had turned her face down upon the pillow so as to shut out the fair moonlight, and repeated over and over again, with a piteous persistence in the words, ‘I have been dreaming; it was a dream—nothing so horrible *could* be true!’ trying so to stifle thought and drown conviction, till suddenly she raised her head, joyful, trembling, melted to thankful tears, in the light of the blessed inspiration that suddenly flashed upon her mind. ‘It was a joke!—a practical joke—this abduction of the bank-notes—done just to give Aunt Dora a little fright, and a little warning! How foolish, not to have guessed that at once! Of course the money would be restored, and confession made the next morning, when Aunt Dora had been thoroughly well frightened.’ In the tremulous thankfulness of this relief, Lucy sank into the sleep from which Aunt Dora had wakened her that morning.

How poor Lucy’s hope that ‘it was all a joke’ had fluctuated through the after proceedings, and had finally faded away altogether, would have been a pitiful thing to see, if any one could have had a clue by which to trace it! Now, she had almost forgotten that the cloud which had enshrouded her since that night had ever been temporarily lightened by that idea. Ah, no! everything was wretched!—the world a miserable place, people inconceivably wicked, and those happiest and best off who had been laid to rest once for all under the churchyard daisies. Poor little Lucy! This, her first practical encounter with absolute, outcrying



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evil, had done the work of years, as, indeed, it always does on natures so tender and innocent.

She rose up now, after a while, and walked slowly homewards; so slowly that it was dark when she reached the house, and quite dark in the drawing-room when she opened the door and entered quietly.

As she did so, the familiar tones of a rich, manly voice reached her, that she would have known among hundreds, and that she recognized now with a great bound of the heart.

Yes; there, surely enough, standing in the full blaze of the firelight, was Jack Eversleigh, laughing and chatting with Aunt Dora as if there were no such things as care, or trouble, or wrong-doing in all this work-a-day world. He stopped short, though, as the door opened and Lucy entered, coming forward the next minute, with, perhaps, ever so little constraint in his manner as he held out his hand. Lucy half extended hers; but, ah! no, her hand must never lie in that large cordial grasp again! She drew it back, and, bowing low, Jack turned easily away to his former place, and resumed his talk, while Lucy sank down trembling into a seat where the shadows gathered most thickly, and almost hid her from view.

Aunt Dora was certainly in the best of moods and spirits (she was auguring favourably for the success of her pet plan and the happiness of Lucy, you see, in this sudden reappearance of Jack Eversleigh), and as for her nephew, his momentary embarrassment had left no palpable traces behind.

'How can he laugh? How can he talk so lightly as he does?' thought the poor child, cowering among the shadows, with a kind of sorrowful, indignant wonder. 'How dare he come here? Is it possible that he did not understand me?—that I did not speak plainly enough?'

She hid her face, and shrank down still more closely in her corner. And still the merry talk and laughter went on by the fireplace.

'*Apropos* of scrapes, Jack,' Mrs. Selwyn said, presently, 'how long is it since you walked into one in your sleep?'

Jack Eversleigh laughed, and coloured a little.

'Oh! ever so many years now—so many, that I hope that propensity and I have parted company for good and all. It used to cause me no end of bother, though, at one time. You remember the——'

And here Captain Eversleigh broke off, to stare in boundless surprise at the little figure starting from that dark corner, with clasped hands, and eager, pallid face.

'A sleep-walker! Do you walk in your sleep? Oh! if it were possible that—Aunt Dora—the bank-notes!—the money that was taken!' cried out poor Lucy, breathless, and shaking in every limb.

'The bank-notes, Lucy!—what an idea! Certainly, Jack had a queer habit of walking in his sleep, and doing strange things in a state of somnolency; but I don't suppose——'

'But I saw him, Aunt Dora!—I saw him! Oh! if I had only known—only guessed! I am so happy—so very, very thankful!' And here Lucy sank down in a burst of tears, that came fresh from her very heart.

'You saw me!' repeated the young man, looking from Aunt Dora to that crouching, weeping little figure, with an expression of bewilderment; 'why did you not say so, then, and save all the bother?'

'I thought you knew what you were doing, and meant to do it. How could I know?' sobbed Lucy.

'Thought that I deliberately, and of my own will, possessed myself of money that did not belong to me!' said Jack, with involuntary haughtiness. But the next instant his sense of the ridiculous overpowered him, and he burst into a laugh so hearty and prolonged that Aunt Dora joined in it, till the tears streamed down her face; and even poor Lucy was fain to echo it, at the dire and imminent risk of becoming hysterical.

'Poor, dear Lucy,' said Mrs. Selwyn, presently, between her gasps for breath; 'so you have really been thinking that Jack played the part of burglar that night. That explains so many things. My poor child! There, I will not laugh any more, if I can help it; but, for heaven's

sake! tell us all about it, for I own I don't see the thing quite clearly yet.'

And so the whole story had to be gone over, or rather dragged into light by questions; for now, such deep, overpowering shame beset Lucy—such a keen perception of the fact that John Eversleigh must of necessity and for evermore hold her in abhorrence—that she was well-nigh speechless,

And Jack, being really a chivalrous and generous-hearted fellow, seeing all the pain and shame in the poor little face, and desirous of sparing it to the uttermost, suppressed whatever feeling he might have had in the matter, after that one involuntary burst, and listened, with good-natured amusement, to the relation of his own exploit.

'I wish you could enlighten me as to what I did with the money, for, on my word, I have never set waking eyes on it. At least, I remember now thinking that it would be a good joke to improvise a burglary, just for Aunt Dora's amusement (you suggested the idea yourself, ma'am, please to recollect);

but what on earth became of the money? Did I go straight back into my room, I wonder?'

'No; down stairs, I think,' said Lucy, faintly.

'The open window in the vestibule, Jack; how is that to be accounted for? Ah! I have it. Do you remember the little summer-house on the other side of the shrubbery? There's a sliding panel that conceals a recess in it, and many a time you have hidden my keys and work-bag there, when you were a boy. Jack, I will wager half the money that you put it there!'

Which, on examination, turned out to be the case. There lay the little ivory-clasped box, containing the roll of bank-notes, never touched since Mrs. Selwyn's hand had placed them in it; and so the mystery of the 'Burglary at Faustel Eversleigh' was a mystery no longer; though in years to come it became a story that Aunt Dora was never tired of telling to the little bright-eyed listeners round her chair, who called the hero and heroine 'papa' and 'mamma.'

J. R. MEARNES.

THE ETHICS OF THE ITALIAN OPERA.

THE Royal Italian Opera season in London has just come to a close, in the two great houses. I leave it to the professed musical critics to give a summary of the operatic season. They will comment on some eccentricities of management and some failures of promises. Of course there will be some flaws of detail to be pointed out, and the critics will have their private preferences. But I trust they will all do justice to the immense talent and zeal shown both by Mr. Gye and Mr. Mapleson. They deserve the utmost credit, and I trust and believe that they have both obtained substantial success. It is hardly possible to conceive anything more splendid and inspiring than an evening in the height of the season at one of the London houses devoted

to Italian opera. It is a subject which may well open up a vein of reflection for the moralist. De Quincey, in his familiar talk, used to say that he looked upon Italian opera as the highest outcome of our civilization. It is, indeed, the very flower and crown of our modern life of intellectual luxury and refinement. It may be doubted whether the spectacle or the spectators go furthest to make up the imposing effect of the whole. The finest conceptions of great masters are interpreted by the highest vocalization which the world can furnish, with the best scenery and decorations which the highest artistic skill can elaborate; and the mighty audience represents an amount of wealth, eminence, culture, and intelligence, such as nowhere in the land is gathered

together in such a mass. Setting aside, for the moment, considerations both of criticism and fashion, it can hardly be doubted that we have in the Italian opera a most important instrument of education and development. It is not alone that the dramatic instinct is gratified—that instinct so deeply engrafted in human nature, that it can no more be entirely eliminated than any other department of our moral being. That highest sense is touched where sense and spirit chiefly commingle; sympathy and imagination are in the highest degree evoked; another and bright intellectual world is thrown open.

Our supposed moralist will be greatly struck, nevertheless, with a kind of immorality in the Italian opera. The stage at the present day, both dramatic and operatic, is free, it is true, from the reproaches which might justly be applied to it with every degree of invective a generation ago. There is no more harm in the opera than in any large fashionable gathering in Mayfair or Tyburnia. Still there exists in many circles a violent dislike to the opera on the score of its supposed evil tendencies. Now it is worth while to examine the weight and extent of this objection, fully allowing the importance of it. It is very desirable that the minds of many worthy people should be settled upon the subject—worthy people who, to our mind, might very well have boxes and stalls of their own. There is, unhappily, a good deal of confusion of thought which leads to much practical insincerity. Many persons will speak slightly and condemningly of an opera, yet, living in the country, they make a point of going to the Opera when in town, or, living in town, they frequent the Opera when they are on the Continent. Churchmen, Presbyterians, Dissenters, they all do it; and we have even met with the enormity of an influential parson denouncing the Opera in his public teaching, and countenancing it in his private practice. The notion of supposed immorality is to a great extent illusory. The Opera is altogether an unreal world, an ideality which, coolly

examined, is simple absurdity. No man in the high concerns of life ever speaks in recitative any more than he adjusts his ordinary conversation so that he should always speak in blank verse. In the same way the plot of the operatic story is equally unreal; no one dwells upon *that*; the dramatic situation is altogether unreal and only of value as it affords a vehicle for the musical rendering.

Still the ordinary construction of an opera, in an ethical point of view, is entirely faulty, in perhaps a majority of instances. When the morality of Mrs. Norton's novel, 'Lost and Saved,' was sharply criticised, that lady wrote a letter to the 'Times,' pointing out that the plot of nearly all the operas was at least as faulty as her own story. Supposing she proved her case, we do not know what her case may be supposed to prove. It would not invalidate the criticism; it would only show that the criticism might be indefinitely extended in another direction. There are some operas so utterly bad that we would not for a moment seek to defend them. Such a one was 'La Traviata,' which the Queen would never hear, and which now her subjects have learned to ignore. There is a school also of captious criticism, the effect of which is decidedly unwholesome and ignoble. This is the school of the very nice people who have very nasty ideas. They drag out the latent indelicacy, which, but for their suggestion, would escape the notice of the innocent-minded. We pity the moral perversity of the man who could carp at 'La Sonnambula,' or 'L'Africaine,' or 'Mirella.' We know instances in which the 'Huguenots' have produced an effect which was, in point of fact, a religious effect. The wonderful genius of Meyerbeer often seizes the very essence of a historical period and gives a large amount of positive instruction. As it was said of some charming woman, that to know her was in itself a liberal education, so also it is a liberal education thoroughly to comprehend an opera of Meyerbeer's. How exactly, in the 'Huguenots,' does he make us understand the period of the war of

the League, doing impartial justice to the merits and defects both of Romanist and Huguenot; and until we have seen the 'Prophète' we hardly comprehend the difficult and curious subject of the Anabaptists. The high educational effect of such operas as these is undoubted. We have often felt in the case of a young man—one who is idling in barracks, or lounging away his time in clubs, or absorbed in dogs, horses, or gambling—that we should be conferring on him a great boon, that we should be going a long way towards making a Cymon fit for an Iphigenia, if we could give such a one a thorough taste for the refined pleasure of the opera. At a heavy dinner, chiefly noticeable for tasteless expense, or witnessing the British institution of tea and scandal, or observing the vapid condition of a circle where colourless conversation or silly novel reading are the only intellectual resource, we often think how well these might be exchanged for the intellectual excitement of an opera, of which the full appreciation would be a distinct intellectual achievement. What we need is some wise discrimination in the matter. There is an unfairness on the part of an important section of the public, in wholly rejecting an amusement because some specimens of that amusement may not be innocuous. We might as well decline society on account of its scandal; we might refuse all invitations because feasting implies an opening for excess; we might go out of the world on account of the acknowledged evil that is in the world. A man does right in declining to assist at an opera when he thinks there is something distinctly wrong. But we think he is mistaken if he debars himself from one of the highest forms of intellectual culture in cases where there is no ethical objection. We go further. It is still a sad fact, that the highest efforts of musical genius are in music allied to some of the lowest weaknesses of humanity. But even allowing this, it is still an open question whether, on account of this base element, we should abdicate a portion of that intellectual culture which is one of the highest duties

of rational beings. We do not discard Shakespeare on account of his grossness, nor Dante on account of his superstition. More, perhaps, is to be said on behalf even of the opera whose libretto we dislike, than might be supposed. Take up, for instance, the plays of Beaumarchais, whose favourite character of Figaro has occasioned two most exquisite operas, 'Il Barbiere di Seviglia' and 'Le Nozze di Figaro.' Any one who compares even the libretto of the opera of 'Le Nozze di Figaro' with the writings of Beaumarchais, will perceive the immense advance of the opera upon the drama. There is still an objection to the construction of the plot, but in the opera the story is refined and even to some extent dignified. Mozart has some of his most beautiful compositions in this opera; the language of passion was never translated into music more eloquently and nobly. Again, take the 'Don Giovanni,' against which the ethical objection is still more strong. Mozart used to say that he composed that opera, not for the public, but for his friends. There was not the least thought of pandering to an evil nature in that great *maestro*. Indeed, what we know of his life seems utterly to forbid any such supposition. A young man passionately attached to his wife, devotedly fond of his little ones, tremblingly alive to each fine influence of nature and of art, Mozart lived a life of abstraction, in a region of ideas which left him a mere child in the things of this life. The dramatic situations were mere key notes; he looked upon them as the mere mechanism of his divine art; he gave them an interpretation so utterly removed from any baseness of their own, that it is not a mere translation, but an entire transference into another and higher region. Mozart's genius was, in fact, Shakespearian, but its general bias and tendency, almost from the very first till the 'Requiem,' were towards sacred music. In his highest operas there are bars of music that would suit his mass music; and yet on the first showing as great an ethical objection might lie against his 'Don Giovanni' and 'Nozze di Figaro'

as against any opera that might be named; an objection of which the composer was probably utterly unconscious. It is impossible to place the opera on the same footing as a corresponding literary work; to condemn the 'Don Giovanni' of Mozart, as we condemn the 'Don Juan' of Byron.

I am tolerably familiar with nearly every part of the Opera Houses. I have lounged in my stall, and chatted in my box; I have crushed in at the pit entrance, and I have adventurously scaled the heights of the amphitheatre. To the best of my belief, the most genuine lovers of operatic music are to be found in the pit and the amphitheatre. These places afford a real test whereby to gauge musical ardour. A man waits in the colonnade long before the hour of opening, and then stays his patient half-hour in the pit before the overture strikes up. Men and women climb up to the heated ceiling, where they see and hear only indifferently well, in their desire for a keen intellectual pleasure—highly-educated men, quiet, lady-like women in hundreds, with a deep love of the highest music, and insufficient means to be able to enjoy it in its perfection. The notion of such persons being influenced in their attendance by prurient curiosity is simply puerile, and only indicative of a very literal, commonplace, unrefined mind. One can hardly conceive better evidence than that thus furnished to us of the innocuousness and elevating influence of the opera.

Anything of which the intention is obviously evil ought to be discouraged. Some time back, visiting the Haymarket Theatre, we were much pained by the gratuitous introduction of coarse language and swearing not in the text of the play that was being acted. We do not wonder at the decline of the British drama, when its interests are prejudiced, in this shameful manner, and the classes, on whose support it ought to rest, are thus alienated. We believe it would be well if persons should refuse their support to such theatres, and reserve it for those who are

content with the legitimate amusements of the drama. Mr. Fechter, for instance, never thinks it necessary to incorporate evil words, through mere love and affinity to evil. From such a reproach as this we believe that the opera is completely free. Many persons scarcely admit ethical considerations in the question of their amusements, and these will, of course, attend all operas indiscriminately. We trust they will derive all the good, and as little of the evil as possible, from such mixed performances. We are sure that there is a large class to whom it is altogether pure, on whom the evil does not even glance, and who find in it a source of high intellectual happiness. Our point is this, that those who do not attend the opera at all should give it a discriminating support. When managers understand that public taste is thus leavened for the better, and that the public demand that the sense of the good and fair should not be disturbed, they will wish to progress in usefulness and goodness of purpose. Much may be done for the improvement of the opera, as Wagner has shown; and in connection with this, we regret that the production of 'Tannhäuser' has been so long deferred. It will be a good, both for the mental elevation of the middle classes and the moral elevation of the opera, when the sound, religious mass of people, to a greater extent than at present, will attend the lyric or dramatic entertainment which they can 'approve, and only stand aloof from those which they cannot. On the more general objections which are sometimes made, on the score of time and the score of expense, we have not entered, as they are only accidental to the argument. A man who cannot afford the time, has no right to attend meetings at Exeter Hall; and a man who cannot afford the money, has no right to give a guinea to a charitable institution. We object to the objections against the opera, so far as they are merely traditional—the echoes of a conventional, stereotyped morality, than which nothing can be more fatal to the cause of good manners, and the freedom and integrity of moral life.

DE PROFUNDIS.

SHE has left me alone in my sorrow,
 The maid with the fathomless eye—
 And her heart was betrothed to another,
 Ere the tear of our parting was dry.

Ah ! youth was my bane, little Cupid ;
 And razors no comfort can bring,
 For my whiskers are all in prospective,
 My moustache is a pitiful thing.

She knew that I loved her to madness,
 And youth made my passion sublime ;
 Oh ! had she but waited a little—
 It was merely a matter of time—

I'd have poured out my soul in her praises,
 Written sonnets and songs by the score,
 And swamped these dear magazine pages
 With a flood of poetical lore !

But vanished the mists and the glory,
Queen Mab with her fairy-like team—
And I waken like one who was dreaming,
And finds it was only a dream.

I will stroll through the fields and the meadows,
And weep to the lapwing's cry,
With a brier-root pipe in my pocket
And a packet of Bristol bird's-eye.

And the smoke will arise like incense
In clouds from the reeking bowl,
Far up on the woodlands and meadows,
Like the sigh of a weary soul ;

EVENINGS ON THE BALCONY.

'GAINST a veil of sunset fires
Loom the slowly darkening spires,
Pinnacled in dusky glare ;
Through the twilight ceaseless coming,
Lo! the city's mighty humming
Palpitating on the air.

Rippling down the ornate fretwork,
Flowers in a tangled network,
Bathed in flood of silver light ;
With the soft wind weirdly woven
Comes the music of Beethoven,
Breaking out upon the night.

From the open window gleaming,
Leaps a warm glad lustre, streaming
Through the curtains' filmy haze ;
Underneath the trellised roses,
Fondly tended, one reposes
Eloquent of other days.

Days when frame and mind were youthful,
When the earnest and the truthful
Ruled the atmosphere of life ;
Recollections of a mother
And a bold, true-hearted brother—
Recollections of a wife.

Bright-haired Lilian, dark-eyed Edith,
Listen while the old man readeth
From the book of dear old times ;
Calling from the palace tower,
Lo! the voices of the hour
Fill the air with solemn rhymes.

A. K.

QUEENS OF COMEDY.

MADELINE BROHAN, OF THE FRANÇAIS.

IT is hardly possible to over-estimate the power of a great actress. She is usually handsome, has fine eyes, and knows how to use them; a good presence, and a sweet natural voice, over which she has perfect control. Her voice and features act in concert, like a combined attack of artillery and infantry; and she has a strong 'will,' that strange concentration of temper, faith, energy, and perseverance that forms the motive power of genius and of talent. Lastly—and this, perhaps, is the chief source of her charm—she is a woman!

The triumphs of a queen of society and of a queen of comedy are strangely like, and strangely unlike. The one is born great, the other achieves greatness; or, as is sometimes the case, has greatness thrust upon her. The *grande dame* receives the homage of the world with a gracious consciousness of her sovereignty; the queen of comedy

bends to the thronged audience with the same stately courtesy. 'The countess is charming to-night,' remark the men in the room. 'The Siddons is in splendid force this evening,' say the *habitués* of the stalls. The newspapers inform us that the Marchioness Blank-blank entertained distinguished and fashionable company on such or such an evening, and that Miss Star-star is about to appear in a new character, translated expressly for her from the French by that eminent English dramatist, Mr. Lifter. Young men with a talent for admiring their friends speak boastfully of a man they know who dines at Lady Blank-blank's, as they do of one who is on speaking terms with Miss Star-star. Young Aldershott, when he is very young looks up to Lady Blank-blank as to a moon that it is useless crying for. Miss Star-star, by dint of study, passing examinations, a foreign war,

hard fighting, glory and distinction might be attained. Her hand is the *bâton de maréchal* he most covets. When Lady Blank-blank descends the stairs to her carriage, servants look down their eyes, and stand up against the wall, motionless as gorgeous beetles in a naturalist's collection. When Miss Star-star alights from her brougham and glides upon the stage, carpenters touch their paper caps, and even gasmen are stricken with awe. When Lady Blank-blank is only a princess of society, and the Earl of Blank-blank carries her away, many gallant bachelor noblemen and gentlemen, who have retired from

the army, re-enter it, or seek diplomatic distinction in remote parts of India. When Miss Star-star is led to the hymeneal altar, several inconsolables find a temporary balm for their disappointment in Baden-Baden and brandy and Seltzer-water. When the princess of society and the queen of comedy are both married, who shall say which of their adorers they really loved? who shall say that they did not cherish a passion for one—or two—who looked on them indifferently? who shall say—indeed, considering the vastness, variety, and complication of the subject—who shall say anything at all?

W.T.

MADemoiselle VICTORIA, OF THE 'Gymnase' AND THE 'Français.'

When the sceptre falls; when fashion changes; when raven hair is as nothing, and golden locks are considered sunlight; when a newer and younger queen pushes the old queen from the throne,—what then? It is left to royalty in retreat to lament the vulgarity and degradation of the present taste, &c., &c. It is something to have been a queen; but it is terrible to be displaced—to be pointed out by parvenus as old-fashioned. Then consolation must be drawn from memory. The time was—'Autres temps, autres

meurs,' and mirrors are not so truthful as they used to be.

The queens of comedy here treated of are not of the past. They are reigning monarchesses—if there be such a word, and if not, it is now presented to the English language, which has adopted worse—they can be seen in that pleasantest of the capitals of Europe—Paris.

Our first engraving is of Mademoiselle Madeline Brohan, who holds a high reputation for talent and for beauty. Of her beauty our readers may judge. They should be

informed that Mademoiselle Madeline Brohan is tall and stately, with the air and manner usually associated with Lady Macbeth, tempered by the coquetry of a court shepherdess. She is an accepted artiste of the first class. She has made her proofs, and conquered the fastidious Frenchmen who rule dramatic art in Paris, in the plays of Racine, Corneille, and Molière. Her school of acting is the grand high school, that never descends to trick or palpable art. She has the power—so rare upon the English stage—of *looking* love out of her eyes, while she is speaking on an indifferent subject; and this without looking *too much* love. Her love is the passion of a real living woman, that thinks the man she chooses handsome, tall, clever, and courageous. She is not one of those *petites maîtresses* who amuse themselves with an affection, and minauder through the semblance of a passion. She can coquette; but she feels that she is only coquetting, and does not attempt mock-passion or morbid sentimental self-deception. This peculiar quality in her art is remarkably exemplified in her performance in Dumas's 'Verre d'Eau,' and in Alfred de Musset's 'Caprice.' Her latest triumph is in the 'Marquise,' in Monsieur Ponsard's play of 'Le Lion Amoureux.' The marquise is of the very bluest blood of France. She is a widow—her husband perished by the guillotine during the Terror. Her father, an avowed and fearless enemy of the Republic, is in exile. She waits upon Humbert—the Citizen Humbert—the General Humbert—the patriot Humbert—the leading member of the Committee of National Safety—to ask permission for her father to return to Paris. Her toilette is plain and simple, for she fears lest she should excite the prejudices of the stern republican by any sign of sumptuary distinction. Humbert looks at the lovely patricienne. Her hands are white, and show no marks of labour—disgusting! Her complexion, fair and well preserved by the arts of the toilette, is untanned by the sun and unseamed by the rugged lines of labour—

offensive! Her eyes are dark and lustrous; the patriot receives a glance from them. Will the *citoyenne* be seated? The *citoyenne* is pleading for a father, and is a woman of the world. The patriot will not grant her prayer. The presence of patricians is dangerous to the State. 'But,' murmurs the *citoyenne-marquise*, 'surely I should not be called a patrician; I have been a servant in a public-house.' 'A servant!' repeats the patriot, interested at once. 'Yes,' replies the petitioner; 'when the Revolution broke out we fled to Germany. I was alone and without means. I took service in a small auberge.' The patriot is more interested than ever. A marquise *could not* care about her father; those sort of people never do; it is not in their nature: but a servant-girl at a pothouse, accustomed to the drawing of beer, washing of dishes, and rinsing of pots, is a superior person—indeed, quite a human being: and then, such eyes to examine quart mugs, and such hands to dust down tables, and such a presence to answer the beck and call of drunken boors, such a liquid treble to cry 'Coming, sir!' The member of the Committee of National Safety will think of the petition of the marchion—of the ex-waitress. The lady perceives her advantage: the waitress has served her turn; the marchioness too may help her. She informs the stern patriot that he was born on her father's estate; and that they were friends when they were children. They played together on the borders of the forest near the château. 'Great Powers!' thinks the patriot, 'and is this the lovely child who was my boyish idol? and have those dear white hands washed glasses?' The prayer of the *citoyenne* is granted; and the patriot has fallen head over ears in love with a *ci-devant*. Nor is the *ci-devant* unconscious of the rugged virtues of the citizen-general; of the deep, passionate, unselfish nature hidden beneath the rough crust of *sans culottism*. If not killed, she is winged; if not hit mortally, she is stricken. She offers General Humbert an invita-

tion to a *réunion* at Madame Tallien's that evening—the ex-marchioness has invited; the general is about to refuse—when he catches a glint from the eyes of the ex-waitress, and accepts. They salute, and the citizen conducts the *citoyenne* to the door.

This scene Mademoiselle Madeline Brohan acts to the life, and without exaggeration or apparent effort. It is in the artiste's manipulation of the delicate shades—the *nuances* of emotion, character, and manner—that she is so admirable. At one moment she is a lady, conscious of the advantage of her birth; the next, she is conscious that she is of a proscribed race. She evokes recollections of the past—of her services at the auberge, of her childhood, of her widowhood, of her former state, her present defencelessness—and all this is not acted, not spoken of, but inferred by manner, by inflection of voice, and expression of face; and through all, a dawning love of the man she is addressing is felt and understood, though not expressed. This is one of the peculiar qualities of the dramatic art in which the French excel us. We English are such downright truth-tellers, that we require the characters on our stage to make a plain statement of their feelings. Even Iago tells us what a villain he is in his soliloquies. If a young lady has to avow a reciprocity of feeling, she does it with an almost brutal candour, something after this fashion—

'Yes, Edward! I love you—I adore you! and never shall this heart be another's!'

Plain, straightforward, and candid—but too candid for nature. These avowals should be made by expression of feature, intonation, and those thousand graces that women, when they love, know how to *exploit* so well.

In conclusion, Mademoiselle Madeline Brohan is a great 'widow.' It will be remembered that in France marriages are made by parents, and that mutual inclination is no part of the bargain. It is the young widow, then, who feels, thinks, and acts for herself; who

has some knowledge of the world, who has travelled, who has observed, who possesses friends, tact, social consideration, and position; who is rich, and can afford the indulgence of her affections; who is not above treating the man she has selected as a good second, with some small *tracasserie*; and who, though she will not absolutely 'propose' herself, will force a proposal from a timid gentleman unaccustomed to the arts of matrimonial diplomacy.

MADemoisELLE VICTORIA, OF THE 'GYMNASE' AND THE 'FRANÇAIS.'

Mademoiselle Madeline Brohan is the brilliant widow of comedy, Mademoiselle Victoria is the sentimental spinster, in maiden meditation, *not* fancy free.

A pupil of Madame Rose Cheri, who was the directress of the Gymnase, in the best days of the Gymnase, Mademoiselle Victoria, though less brilliant than her instructress, is more tender. The pensive, dreamy eyes convey the impression of an attachment unfortunately placed. Young ladies in France are not allowed the same unrestricted freedom as English girls. They would consider it an infraction of maidenly dignity to show the smallest sign of susceptibility or preference. They never tell *their* love, but concealment, like a worm i' the bud, &c., does its work. The peculiar genius of Mademoiselle Victoria will be best described by saying that she suffers uncomplainingly; and yet her whole audience are conscious of every pang she feels. In the part of a young lady, an orphan with small means, living in the house of a rich uncle, and devotedly attached to a *beau cousin*, who makes her the confidant of his love for another, she would be charming. She would advise her cousin how to win her rival's heart, and strive her utmost to promote the match, though all the time she knew that her cousin's marriage would be her death-warrant. She would make friends with the young lady, 'Edouard's future,' and help to dress her hair for conquest. She

would pet the bride, and put up with her ill-humours. She would love her suffering, and suffer for her love; and when Edouard—presuming that to be the name of the *beau cousin*—had made a wife of a pretty, brainless little milliner's lay-figure, she—Mademoiselle Victoria, or rather the part that she was playing—would die, and the curtain would fall upon the piece, and the entire audience would execrate the blindness of stupid Monsieur Edouard.

The character above mentioned is, as yet, unwritten; but one of Mademoiselle Victoria's triumphs of this particular sort was noticed

in these pages some three years ago. Marguerite was young, and loved a young gentleman, Marcel, by name; but Marcel took no notice of her; and Marguerite pined, and fell sick, and was in danger. Her friends, fearing for her life, told her that Marcel loved her, and had their consent to marry her. Marcel himself arrived most opportunely; and an interview ensued, in which Marcel discovered that he had, unknown to himself, loved Marguerite from the first moment that he had seen her. The patient rallies surprisingly, and the doctor is more convinced than ever that neither poppy nor mandragora, nor all the drowsy

MADemoiselle MARTIN, OF THE 'PALAIS ROYAL'

syrops of the East, nor any other drugs to be found in the pharmacopœia, can medicine half so well to a young lady as the interchange of mutual vows, and the immediate prospect of a wreath of orange-blossoms. Unfortunately, the roughness of the course of true love is proverbial. She is told by a venomous old maiden aunt that her friends have only been deceiving her; that they have humoured her fancies in order to restore her to health, and that her lover himself is in the plot. The poison is swift. The fever returns; and with it a mental exaltation that invites death. She is at the window, watching the falling

of the snow. She has been told that, in her critical state, to take cold would be her death. Well, Marcel no longer loves her. She has been treated like a capricious child, life is not worth having; then welcome death! She deliberately tears off a portion of her outer-clothing, opens the window, steps into the balcony, and exposes her bare head and shoulders to the wintry storm.

As this picture may be too terrible for the excitable and sympathetic, it may be mentioned that Marcel passes by in a carriage; sees his beloved pelted by the pitiless snow; climbs the balcony, and restores Marguerite to vital heat and to her-

self, by the united means of love and a fur overcoat.

Whenever an artiste makes a name, several fine old four-centuries-bottled stock anecdotes are brought to light, and connected with his or her name. Who has not heard of the great singer who, when a poor child, was sitting on a doorstep, nursing a younger sister, and singing a ballad to lull the babe to slumber, when a bishop happened to be walking by—bishops so often walk—and, struck with the melody of the child's voice, stopped and spoke to her; found her of an intelligence beyond her years and station; had musical instruction given her; and so paved her way to the Grand Opéra. Then there is another paragraph, familiar as 'Enormous Gooseberries' and 'Extraordinary Aërolites,' which relates how a great artist was in his or her carriage, when he or she saw a crowd assembled around a party of street mountebanks, which he or she—the great artist—recognized as friends of childhood. To leap from his or her carriage—to recognize these friends of childhood—is of course but the work of a moment. To sing, or act, or paint a picture, or compose an opera, or to give a proof of their genius is the work of a second moment; and to go round with the hat for the benefit of their childhood's friends sufficiently occupies a third. The whole thing is generous, impulsive, makes a good advertisement, and tells well. The fact of the occurrence cannot be doubted. Folks who have risen to fame and fortune are invariably eager to find out the lads and lasses they have left behind them.

The following little anecdote, however, is not manufactured, but is true as it is charming—

Mademoiselle Victoria was left an orphan at an early age, and was adopted by a workman of Lyons, received into his house, fed, clothed, and reared by him. La petite Victoria helped her adopted father's scanty means by finding employment in the theatre. It was a very few francs a week; but it was something. One day, little Victoria

heard her father express a wish to become proprietor of a small plot of land.

'Hein! Stomach Blue! But that I wish that it were mine!' said the *ouvrier*.

'Then why not buy it, father?' asked little Victoria.

'Why not buy it, little mother?' said the workman. 'Ah! but I haven't any money.'

'But you have some sous, father.'

'Yes, my little, *some* sous; but not enough to buy that plot of land.'

About six months after, la petite Victoria ran to her papa, and, giving him a bagfull of copper, said—

'Now, papa! there are enough sous to buy the little plot with!'

'Where do these come from?' asked the astonished workman.

'Instead of going to the theatre at night and morning by the bridge that it costs a sou to cross each time, I walked round to the further bridge, and saved the sous, and there they are, papa!'

It was a terrible disappointment to the little Victoria to learn that even the accumulation of six months was insufficient for the coveted land. Years after, when she was an acknowledged actress, she visited Lyons, found out her adopted father, and presented him with the title-deeds of the estate he had longed for all his life.

Mademoiselle Victoria's most recent triumphs have been in the dramas and comedies of Piccolino. 'Les Ganaches,' 'Le Demon de Jeu,' 'Un Maison sans Enfants,' and 'L'Œillet Blanc.' She is now a societaire of the Théâtre Français, and the wife of Monsieur Lafontaine (also of the Français), to whom she had been engaged for many years.

MADemoiselle MASSIN, OF THE 'PALAIS ROYAL'

If the sort of lady presented to us on the stage by Mademoiselle Madeline Brohan would make an admirable ambassadress, Mademoiselle Victoria would make home happy with love in a cottage, with few other appliances than a small li-

brary and a pearl of a baby. Mademoiselle Massin, of the Palais Royal, is a *charmante jeune personne* of a totally different sort. She is blonde—and very blonde, with hair the colour of that portion of a loaf which is called kissing-crust. She is *mignonne* to distraction, and has a thousand and one gracious, captivating little ways, as attractive as they are indescribable. She is tall, too, is Mademoiselle Massin, and in general appearance looks an *ingénue* to perfection—and particularly the *ingénue* in crisp muslin, peculiar to the atmosphere of the Théâtre du Palais Royal, who has a papa and a mamma, to whom she yields implicit obedience—an obedience that would be angelic, if it were not mechanical. The Palais Royal *ingénue* is the dearest little doll in the world; she answers, ‘Oui, mon papa,’ and ‘oui, maman,’ like a *poupée à vingt francs*. She receives her future husband with antarctic politeness. She is ready to marry anybody, presented by papa or mamma. Will she be the wife of Jules—‘oui, papa;’ or of Alphonse—‘oui, papa;’ or of Le Commandant César—‘oui, papa.’ The pretty face and the fresh toilette have no preference.

Not that Mademoiselle Massin is such a piece of still life. On the contrary, she is gay, vivacious, sprightly, and *espiègle*. Given a gentleman without any very deep feeling, or sentiment, or earnestness, and fond of amusement—and many Frenchmen are of that particular temperament—and the young personage Mademoiselle Massin creates upon the stage would be the very wife for him. They could breakfast together at a café in the morning: and madame would be complaisance and good-humour themselves. She would ride down to the Bois; she would dine enjoyably; and, perhaps, after dinner she

would take a cigarette—why were we sent into this world, but to be gay? After the cigarette, a slumber—ever so little bit of a slumber; the kind of slumber that is to a sleep as a cigarette to a meerschaum. Then to dress again, and a bal—occasionally a bal masqué—which is a joy for ever; and a *costume de fantaisie très chic*. Happy would be that husband, gifted with a fine eye for bonnets, who was blessed with such a wife. Conceive the happy man, arrayed in morning-jacket and easy slippers, sipping a small cup of fragrant coffee, and resolving in that airy receptacle which he believes to be his mind, what dishes he shall eat for breakfast. To him enters Julie, the beloved of his waistcoat. On Julie’s pretty head is a milky bonnet—the work of tasteful fairies. Does Auguste love the bonnet?—Auguste does love the bonnet. And the ribbons?—And the ribbons. And there is another bonnet too—will Auguste see that?—Auguste will see it. He is charmed and ravished by it. She is gentille! she is ado-r-r-r-able! and they will have truffled partridge for breakfast, and salmon with lemon sauce, and red currants, and iced cream. And what is this world without love and simple pleasures, and the union of two fond hearts, and the Opéra Comique, and life ‘à la meringue à la crème?’

It is to be feared that the marriage of Julie and Alphonse would be a trifle frivolous, and would pall after the age of forty.

Gentlemen bachelors, it is for you to declare which sort of Queen of Hearts would be most soothing to your ambition, sentiment, and comfort,—the majestic, regal ruby, the patient, gentle, domestic heart-warmer, or the tempting, brilliant little bonbon.

T. W. R.



A DAY'S EXCURSION INTO SPAIN.



ONSIEUR desires to know the name of the river? It is the Bidassoa.'

So a boatman said, one brilliantly beautiful morning towards the close of last summer. We had taken train from Biarritz to the little village of Hendaye, a village which, by the way, attained some notoriety a few weeks later, owing to the alleged discovery of a plot to assassinate the Emperor of the French there as he passed through on his way to San Sebastian to meet the Queen of Spain, with the intention of seeing something of the kingdom on the other side of the Pyrenees. We had arrived at Hendaye at an hour when people are usually only contemplating leaving their beds; we had breakfasted there at the

railway station, and we had engaged a boatman to take us diagonally across the river to Fontarabia, the first Spanish town which we intended visiting. Then it was that a party of four English tourists, complacently puffing at their pipes and admiring the scenery, seated themselves in the stern of a well-kept boat and asked the question which brought forth the response written above.

The Bidassoa! Immediately a host of historical recollections rushed into our minds, and we thought of that memorable day when in the early morning the allied armies, commanded by the Marquis of Wellington, left the Spanish ground to cross the placid river over which we were being rowed to make their stand upon French territory. Immediately in front of us rose the tower of the church of Fontarabia, the tower from which a rocket signalled the advance, and instinctively the names of such men as Lord Aylmer, General Wilson, and Colonel Maitland occurred to us; indeed throughout the day in every direction our eyes rested on towns or mountains, the names of which two-and-fifty years before had been familiar to every Englishman in connection with the campaign of the Western Pyrenees.

In the course of time, hazy historical recollections having been voted a nuisance, and our pipes being finished, the keel of the boat touched mud—Spanish mud—and we landed on a narrow stone quay and stood within the precincts of the old picturesque weather-beaten cannonaded Moorish town of Fontarabia.

Words can hardly do justice to the charm of the old town as a subject for an artist's pencil, while pen fails to give a notion of the objectionable character of the place as one in which to dwell.

Unfortunately, picturesqueness and civilization rarely go hand in hand, and Fontarabia, while it excels in romantic gables, overhanging roofs, rich cornices, and external decorations, cannot be said to be free from dirt, garlic, and insects. The houses now ruined and dilapidated, partly by time and partly by cannon-balls, doubtless once were the residences of wealthy Moors, for they bear token still of the splendour which they must have once possessed. Picture a long narrow street, with houses, the different stories of which project one above the other till the ornamented cornices at the top so nearly meet as to permit only of a long strip of blue sky to be visible; fancy these houses decorated with decaying carvings and rotting imagery; fill this street with handsome bronzed-featured men and

women in the picturesque costume of the Spanish peasant; imagine the rich colouring of the old wood, deep in hue from the effect of time, not smoke, enlivened by two brilliant awnings and curtains, to say nothing of the ripe luscious fruit displayed in windows and piled up at street doors, and you may have some faint notion of the general appearance of this most picturesque town. Fancy this and be content; do not essay to peep into the interior, unless you are prepared to encounter a thousand and one smells, each worse than the preceding, garlic being the best—unless you are prepared with a change of raiment to don in all haste on coming out. Cleanliness is a virtue which the Spanish peasant has never yet cultivated; and as Fontarabia is handed over to that class, houses which once may have belonged to wealthy men, being now tenanted in separate floors by the common people—when they are not shut up and suffered to go to decay altogether—it is better for visitors not to be over curious, and to exercise their powers of imagination in fancying what those interiors may have been centuries since, without seeking to penetrate into their dark recesses in the present day.

There is little to see at Fontarabia with the exception of this one street, which, however, no lover of the picturesque within reach of it should fail to visit. At one end of it is situated the church, and into it we entered, to be astonished at the great contrast it offered to those in a country which, though only separated from it by a river, has different manners, customs, and language. Fontarabia, though a poor, miserable, decaying collection of houses, manages to supply its church with rich vessels and decorations of which a cathedral need not be ashamed. Mass was being performed at the time we entered, consequently we were unable to inspect the edifice as we should have wished. The floor of the church was crowded with kneeling figures attired in that pleasing variety of dress which the Spanish peasant assumes, and which has been made

familiar to us by pictures; these groups were all in deep shade, but occasional bits of bright colour or sparkles of light upon ear rings or necklaces shone out from behind the pillars; the altar alone was in high light; there lamps burned, and white-robed priests moved hither and thither, while the consecrated vessels of gold and silver glittered in the light of many candles; the scent of incense filled the building, and low harmonious chanting, now faint, now swelling louder, added greatly to the effect.

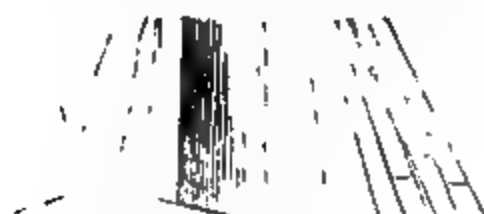
Near to this church is the ancient citadel, an ugly stone building on high ground. It appears to have served as a mark for the artillery in the war-time, and many cannon-balls are imbedded in the stone, whilst there is hardly a yard of it which does not bear the mark of shot. The door was open, everything betokened a deserted ruin, and we entered, urged on by curiosity; but no sooner were we inside than a troop of beggars, springing from unaccountable nooks and corners, surrounded us, whining piteously, and in a jargon neither French nor Spanish supplicated for alms. A more hideous and revolting collection of creatures I have rarely seen. They were clothed—if such a word may be applied to them—in dirty rags, which hung about them in disorder, and it would have been a greater act of kindness to have soused them in the Bidassoa than to have given them the few sous which they almost demanded from us.

In leaving the town we crossed the ruins of the old fortifications, which have been demolished, and passed under an archway of crumbling grey stone, from the crevices of which grew the maiden-hair fern in lovely bunches and feathery sprays. Our boat was waiting for us, and we bade adieu to Fontarabia, still an imposing-looking town from a little distance, and rowed down the Bidassoa towards Trun. The word 'rowed' must be here received with caution. The river is very shallow at low water, the tide falling sixteen feet, and our progression was slow and undig-

nified. More than once we ran aground, upon which our boatmen jumped overboard and pushed us along, walking and chatting by our side scarcely up to their knees. They were not the only men in the river. Dotted about in every direction were men and even women standing in the water armed with rude spades which they dug into the bottom, bringing to the surface mud, stones, and a certain shell-fish, uncommonly like a cockle; such fish they put into a bag, slung in front of them for the purpose. It seemed to be but slow sport, and hardly worth the wetting; but our boatman told us these crustacea form a great part of the diet of the

poorer classes. A pleasant preparation for your dinner, digging it from the bottom of the river.

Passing beneath the handsome railway bridge which spans the Bidassoa and unites the kingdoms of France and Spain, we proceeded up the river towards Trun, which we should have reached by water, but the tide was so low that we were forced to stop short of our destination, get ashore as best we could, and proceed by land to the next town we purposed visiting. Despite the heat, the walk was not an unpleasant one, leading us through field after field of Indian corn growing to a height of seven or eight feet. Many were the



bronzed men and handsome, dark-eyed women with whom we interchanged greetings during our walk. At last the white houses and red roofs of the town of Trun came in sight, and then, bidding good-bye to the boatman who thus far had served as a guide, we proceeded on our way alone in a strange country, of the language of which we knew nothing. Trun is a place of great antiquity, but beyond the church and the market-place we saw but little of it. In the former, as at Fontarabia, mass was being per-

formed, and in the latter we purchased—by means of signs—as many grapes as the four of us could eat for a few sous. Then turning our backs upon the town we hastened to the railway station, and took tickets for the place where we proposed spending the day, for it was yet morning—San Sebastian.

Were I so disposed, I might here describe at length the siege of the town, giving the names of the commanders, the number of killed and wounded, and the events resulting from this victory of the allied

armies; but as I should have to copy it from books, to which the reader can refer as easily as I, I purpose avoiding, as far as possible, all reference to San Sebastien in an historical manner, simply confining myself to giving an account of a day's visit to a Spanish watering-place.

It is strange to notice how, by almost imperceptible degrees, one country melts into another, till in the space of a few hours, you find yourself lunching in a land with different people, dress, manners, customs, and language to that in which you breakfasted; and as the train drew up at the platform of the San Sebastien station, we left the carriage, conscious that we were no longer '*hommes*,' but '*caballeros*,' and that we actually were in Spain, the land of adventures, cigarettes, stilettoes, priests, and bull-fights.

Flags waved gaily on each side of the road leading from the railway station to the town, the queen having only arrived the previous day. They lent an air of bright animation to the dusty road; and the high, white, many-windowed, balconied houses, with their red-tiled roofs, shone and glistened in the sun, the high hill crowned with the citadel rising imposingly behind them.

To the English tourist entering Spain three things start prominently forward to attract his attention. First, the heat; second, the cigarettes, and third, the priests. About the heat there can be no manner of doubt; the sun bakes down from a clear, dark-blue sky, and is reflected from houses aggravatingly white and dazzling, from green blinds painfully brilliant, from red tiles overpoweringly glaring, and from dusty roads painfully, chokingly hot. For some reason the Spanish side of the Pyrenees is always brighter than the French; whenever clouds roll along valleys and cap mountains in this part of the world, it is upon the French side. I have myself, in crossing one of the highest of the Pyrenean passes, ascended, on the French side, through thick cloud, opaque mist, and pertinacious drizzle, to

cross the narrow ridge which divides the two kingdoms, to find the Spanish side bathed in sunlight, and the peaks of the high mountains standing out clear and sharp against a blue-black sky; and this is no uncommon occurrence. Upon another occasion, from the Pic de Nethon, the highest point of the Maladetta (the Mont Blanc of the Pyrenees), I have seen the view uninterruptedly alike over hill and dale in Spain; while looking across the boundary-ridge into France, there was not a valley which had not its rolling mass of vapour, from which the mountain peaks rose like islands in a huge gray ocean. This, I believe, is accounted for by the difference in soil, that of France being fertile to luxuriance, while the land on the Spanish side is hard, dry, and stony, with comparatively little vegetation.

With respect to the cigarettes, most nations have their peculiarities in tobacco and the mode of using it. The clay pipe is rarely seen out of England; the Germans inhale the soothing weed through long stems from china bowls; the Turks through serpentine tubes. The French smoke their own cigars; the Italians twist their tobacco into long, thin rolls, giving their cigars the appearance of having run to seed, and of really deserving the name of '*weeds*,'—weeds, too, which have grown apace; while in Spain the national mode of smoking is the white-paper cigarette. All classes, from the highest to the lowest, insert the little paper tube between their lips, and suffer the pale-blue fragrant smoke to curl in and about their dark beards and luxuriant moustaches. It must strike every visitor in Spain that appearance of men of all ages placidly puffing at their white cigarettes, at all times and in all places, lighting one from the ashes of another, and inhaling the smoke as if it were the pure air.

As every one, on visiting France for the first time, must have been surprised at the extraordinary number of uniformed men walking and lounging in the streets, so, in passing through a Spanish town,

every one must have remarked the black-robed, strangely-hatted priests, who, with eyes bent on the ground, pass in every direction, occasionally raising their heads to scowl at the English heretics, as if they longed again for the days of the Inquisition and the restoration of the good old fashion of burning those who held a different faith to themselves. Spain is doubtless the most priest-ridden country in the world: her sovereign is said to be entirely under the influence of the Church; and perhaps never was country, so admirably supplied by nature with all the requisites for greatness and prosperity, so sluggish, so involved, and so far behind its neighbours. Naturally, amongst these priests there are many large-minded, talented, clever, energetic men; but, as a rule, their bringing-up, their education, and their employment conduce to narrow-mindedness, and render them unfit to promote the commercial prosperity of a country. Far be it from me to condemn a class of men whom I honour and respect; but, to use a homely expression, 'Let the cobbler stick to his last,' the priest to the church, the statesman to the council-chamber.

Independently of its historical interest, the citadel is the point for which all visitors to San Sebastien make: for from it one of the most superb sea views imaginable is to be obtained. It is built on the summit of a high hill rising very precipitously from the sea, and almost equally steep on the land side. Zigzags, however, conduct the tourist to the top by easy slopes, and the different turns reveal fresh beauties at every step: at one time the prospect being of the mountains and plains of Spain, with the bright sunshiny town lying beneath one's feet; at another, of the distant Pyrenees rearing their head up into the clouds; and at a third, the wide-spreading bay of Biscay, with the sunlight quivering on its waves, with its white spray dashing up against the dark rocks, and the ships tossing on its never-quiet surface. About two-thirds of the way up the adventurous tourist arrives at a tolerably level place,

with bright green turf under foot, and graceful trees bending in the breeze overhead. It is a charming spot; but there is a sad interest attached to it: for, from the brilliantly-green grass rise numerous white stones, with inscriptions upon them, which tell how many gallant men fell in rushing up that steep hill; how they were mowed down by grape and canister as they struggled upwards towards the citadel fighting for their king and country. Beneath the sod, with the trees waving above their graves, lie the bones of many of those brave soldiers who fell in the siege of San Sebastien, the 8th of September, 1813. In a calm, quiet, lovely, peaceful spot they lie, their tombstones facing the ocean and their native land. All honour to them!

It is hard to realize now, in visiting the citadel, the scene of bloodshed and slaughter enacted there little more than fifty years ago, even though the walls bear the unmistakeable traces of the cannon-balls, many of which are still embedded in the stone. A pleasant, peaceful, dilapidated fortification it is now, with its two or three lounging sentries and a sub-officer, dividing his time between smoking cigarettes and looking through a telescope, both in an equally idle and listless manner. No words can do justice to the magnificent panorama obtained from this elevated position—mountains, plains, and ocean, stretching out to an enormous distance, while the picturesque position of San Sebastien, with its beautiful bay and harbour, can be fully appreciated from this vantage ground.

Of guide-book sights which the helpless traveller is bound to see, San Sebastien, with the exception of the citadel, is destitute; its cathedral and churches are remarkable for no architectural beauties; its streets are in no way singular; and its promenade is scarcely worthy of special attention; but a saunter to the bathing-place, even under a broiling sun, will well repay such tourists as may find themselves in this Spanish watering-place.

The mode of bathing at San Sebastien resembles more that of

Ramsgate than Biarritz, the elaborate toilet of the latter place not being considered requisite; but then the social style is not adopted, ladies and gentlemen having different, though adjacent portions of the bay allotted to them, their evolutions being watched from the elevated road which runs round the portion of the bay devoted to aquatic amusements. While on this subject, I must mention the extraordinary duck-like nature of the Spanish *gamins*, who appear to be as much at home in the water as on land. Any part of the bay is their bathing-place, and they swim and dive with marvellous ease. It is a recognised amusement to throw sous into the sea for them to dive after, and the rapidity and dexterity of their movements, on and under water, is well worth the expenditure of a few coins. No sooner does the halfpenny disappear beneath the surface than a dozen pair of heels simultaneously flash in the sun, cleave through the green water and disappear, and, after the lapse of a few seconds, a dozen heads bob up, and one set of teeth clenches tightly the sought-for coin.

We were considerably disappointed in finding that at San Sebastian the graceful mantilla was not *la mode*, the ladies being, for the greater part, attired according to the most recent Paris fashion: however, later in the day, when more people appeared on the promenade, I saw several women wearing it, though not nearly so many as I observed the previous summer in Milan. The gentlemen, too, mostly followed the French fashion in their attire; but the lower orders were dressed in that charming, bright, picturesque costume which is so pleasing to look upon in a picture, but which is so filthily dirty in reality. As for the soldiers, of whom there was no lack—partly, probably, by reason of the queen being at the time stopping at a short distance from San Sebastian,—the less said the better; for a more repulsive, lounging, dirty, untidy-looking set of men, in more frightful, incommensurable, hot, brown uniforms, I think I never had the misfortune

to see. There was nothing of that neat, trim appearance about them to which we are accustomed in the English and French soldiery; and altogether they looked more like an army on the boards of one of the minor theatres than real trained soldiers.

From the citadel, in looking down upon the town, our attention had been attracted to a low circular erection of wood, which we had no difficulty in identifying as the amphitheatre; and towards it, after we had descended the hill, we directed our steps. There had been no bull-fights at San Sebastian for some time, and the place was shut up; however, we had no difficulty in obtaining admission and looking round the scene where so many of those combats had taken place, which, barbarous as they sound in description to English ears, must yet possess a strange interest and fascination to those who witness them. The amphitheatre at San Sebastian is, to tell the truth, but a shabby, tumble-down sort of place, built entirely of wood, with rows of seats rising one above the other. It is not roofed in, and consequently is exposed to the action of the weather, which has rotted the benches and blistered the paint to a most unsightly degree. It, however, possesses a lop-sided, decaying, tawdrily-decorated box, which is reserved for royalty: it is to be hoped that before royalty enters it it will be repaired.

Before visiting Spain we had been warned of the off-hand manner—almost amounting to incivility—we were likely to experience at the hotels; and we found the accounts we had received by no means exaggerated. In the course of the afternoon, having had nothing but the grapes since our breakfast at Hindaye, we were vulgar enough to feel hungry; and we entered an hotel with an imposing inscription, to the effect that French was spoken there. We found no one to receive us, and, unquestioned, we mounted the stairs, looking in vain for some one to whom to state our wants. At length a listless waitress made her appearance, and to her we stated

our wish to be supplied with something to eat.

'There is the table-d'hôte at six o'clock,' she said.

We explained that that was not what we required; but only received the same reply, with the additional information that we need not come to it if we did not like, but that till that hour we could have nothing. In vain we urged our hunger, reducing our demands to bread and cheese. It was useless, 'There is a table-d'hôte at six o'clock,' repeated the girl, haughtily, and swept away, leaving us to stay or go as we thought best. No one else appeared, and, after a consultation, we left the hotel to try a second. There we received the same answer—with the exception that the hour was five.

'You can have nothing now,' said the waiting-maid, almost indignantly. 'At five o'clock there is the table-d'hôte, at which, if there are any vacant places, you can dine.' And she, too, swept haughtily away, as if resenting our intrusion. Ultimately we were compelled to stay our hunger with chocolate and biscuits at a café, and wait for the five o'clock table-d'hôte.

'What places are vacant?' we asked, entering the *salle-à-manger* at the hour named.

'None.'

'Can't we dine here?'

'No.'

Again and again we appealed to the different waiters; but only one spoke French, and we were at her mercy. Finally, driven to desperation, we seated ourselves in line at the table, clutching tightly at our chairs, firmly resolved that nothing but muscular force should remove us; but happily we were allowed to retain possession of the seats, no

one disputing our right; and, to do the hotel proprietor justice, the dinner was certainly an excellent one, and reasonable. Seated next to me was a Spaniard with a bevy of daughters, to whom we four English appeared to form no small source of amusement. Secure in the ignorance of all those near us of the English language, we talked freely concerning our neighbours; when, to my surprise, the Spaniard, laying his hand upon my arm, and pointing to a dish then being handed round, said with a chuckle, 'Ros-bif.'

'Do you speak English?' I asked, not a little alarmed, fearing that our comments upon himself and family might have reached his ears. 'Do you speak English?'

'Plum puddain,' he answered, somewhat irrelevantly.

These words, I believe, constituted his entire knowledge of our language, but they were sufficient to cement a friendship; and on leaving the table, he grasped my hand and shook it cordially, crying out, 'Adieu English,' with the greatest fervour. The head waitress took our money surlily, as if under protest, and then we hastened along the promenade and dusty road to the railway station, where, in what was indeed a *waiting-room*, we spent nearly an hour in expectation of the arrival of the train which was to convey us back to *la belle France*. It came at last; we entered our carriage, and late at night arrived, tired, dusty, and sleepy, at Biarritz, well pleased with our day's excursion into Spain, but, at the same time, entertaining no notion of ever making a lengthy stay in a country where heat, dirt, and incivility are the prevailing characteristics.



VIRGINIA WATER.

‘YOU had better not go to-night, sir,’ said the gatekeeper. ‘I wouldn’t advise you. Keep straight a-head and you can’t go wrong if you don’t lose sight of the water for long. Go in by the little gate; we only open the big gates for the Queen.’

Darkness had settled down upon the close of a glorious summer day. That evening, after tea, I had left the royal burgh of Windsor, and had walked in the marsh through the Long Avenue and the Park, in the direction of Virginia Water, intending to sojourn at the Wheatsheaf that night. I had been devoting a week or two to the exploration of some of the most beautiful and classic scenery in the country—that broad and fair expanse of country which you contemplate from the terrace of Windsor Castle. I had been to Burnham Beeches, beloved by a thousand artists; and Gray’s description applied as exactly as it did a hundred years before; and I visited the grey tower of Stoke Pogis at the hour when each sight and sound repeated itself as in the *Elegy*. I had visited Horton, standing at the grave of Milton’s mother, and trying to compare the Horton poems with the Horton scenery. I had been over to Binfield, which, still secluded by railways, may remind us, with more than ordinary fidelity, of the groves where Pope sang. I had boated down to Runnymede, and I had unearthed Black Pots, where Izaak Walton used to come yearly to fish with the wise Wotton, Provost of Eton. I had gone up to that portion of the Thames by the side of which Shelley had probably meditated some of his best poems. Nearer Windsor one had to look up Datchet, where Falstaff was so ill washen, and where Charles II., according to Lord Rochester, used to fish; and at Windsor itself we had the recollection of the Merry Wives, and then the search for Herne’s Oak, which traditional tree was cut down a few years ago, and its relics dispersed among the curious. Then one had to do the

private apartments at the Castle, and the private grounds of Frogmore with their eight miles of wall-fruit. Every now and then I had a sail on the Thames, where the stream is broadest and most rapid, feathered with dense foliage to the water’s edge, and its shores adorned with magnificent buildings and stately parks. The Thames is here, to my mind, of superior interest to the Rhine, and, unlike the Rhine, we were not pestered with a quantity of English tourists. The little fishing inns were pretty well filled by passionate lovers of angling, who, many of them, come down to these parts year after year; but of regular tourists, taking this home circuit like myself, I only discovered a solitary specimen.

I walked meditatively down one of the side avenues of the Long Walk, and the blaze of sunset had subsided into more sober light as I reached the equestrian statue of George III. Happily the English sunset does not fade as rapidly as the Italian, but is far more beautiful and prolonged. After resting for a few minutes at Snow Hill, admiring Westmacott’s fine work in granite—admiring the Castle view, with its fine groups of beech trees in the foreground—I turned aside in the direction of Cumberland Lodge. This is a great spacious building, which may be comfortable and even luxurious enough, but which has no architectural pretensions. It was the residence of the Duke of Cumberland, the conqueror of Culloden, who tarnished a great achievement by great cruelty. He will always be remembered in connection with the Park and Virginia Water. He was Ranger of the Park, and is sometimes, in local matters, confounded with that other Duke of Cumberland who was also Ranger—a brother of George III.’s. This last Duke of Cumberland was a weak and silly young man. His Royal Highness was a party in a divorce case, in which he had to pay exemplary damages; and all the *quidnuncs* of that day were amused with

the perusal of his ridiculous love-letters, and the knowledge that the boon companions of his Royal Highness looked upon him as little better than a fool and a merry-andrew. The other Duke of Cumberland brought away the materials of Holbein's gate at Whitehall, and intended to have erected it as a termination to the avenue, but death interrupted his design. Near Cumberland Lodge stood the Royal Lodge, which was built by George IV., and formed a secluded retreat which he liked beyond any palatial abode. In such seclusion did he live, that when he took his drives horsemen would scour the country for miles in advance, that no one should intrude on the royal solitude. It is stated in Murray's Guide to Berks, Bucks, and Oxon (a very valuable publication, by the way), that it has all been pulled down except conservatories and drawing-rooms. This, however, is a mistake; the house is beautifully fitted up as a private residence, and enjoyed by a family who are deserving favourites of the Queen. Quite as much to my taste, however, is a certain chapel in the Park, for the use of labourers and others, and served, I think, by the clergy of Old Windsor. Windsor itself is New Windsor; Old Windsor is a pretty village on the Thames, about a mile from the Castle. Quite as pleasing, too, though in another way, was an old Waterloo veteran, covered with medals and clasps, whom I found in charge of one of the lodge gates. I was glad to see that the Crown had provided him, in this lodge, with a spacious and beautiful dwelling, which he had so well deserved; and he was greatly pleased when I requested to have the honour of shaking him by the hand. It was not one of the least associations of the forest that beneath one of its old oaks Sir Walter Scott read aloud his yet unpublished 'Lay of the Last Minstrel.' So I passed along a noble tract, which, though forest no longer, is still forest-like in character, and reached the extremity of the park, where, despite the keeper's warning, I turned aside for my two-mile walk from the gates.

To the thousands of excursionists who come down by the South Western line, or who drive through from Windsor, the warning might appear, as it did to me, quite superfluous. The path is well worn and monotonous; but even such a path may be interesting and exciting, when you are alone, when it is night, when it is one which has many associations for you, and which you are traversing for the first time. The sense of loneliness was as profound as if you had been in the depths of a Canadian forest; for having rested to refresh myself beyond the park limits, it was now very late at night. The lake spread out in the dubious light, large and solemn, and unbroken by sound or sail, seemed almost like a Dead Sea. At times some startled wild thing started across my path—some hare aroused, or pheasant on the wing. At times this path deserted the margin of the lake, and the light deserted the path, and the way was obscure enough. The bearings, however, were speedily discovered. I was, however, very nearly making a raid on the Honourable Mrs. Byng's house, fancying it the 'Wheatsheaf.' The chief peril lay in the dew, which was falling very heavily, and by which I was completely saturated by the time I reached my hostel; I did so when all business was over, and the apparition of a traveller was unexpected. The accommodation was very good; a little costly, perhaps; but this must necessarily be the case with good hotels that can only depend for customers on a certain portion of the year.

I saw things very pleasantly and certainly the next morning. It is a great pleasure, and a rare one, to be enjoying a new landscape in the clear, fresh morning hours. Virginia Water is the largest piece of artificial water in this country. The scenery lost by the distinctness of daylight when compared with the impressions of the preceding night. There was not the bloom and freshness which belong to the real lake embosomed among hills. The total absence of any sort of boat was a drawback. There was not even a

gondola, such as the Empress has placed on the much smaller expanse of water at Fontainebleau. The surroundings are chiefly the edifices of Wyatville. Wyat, *alias* Sir James Wyatville, made the fishing temple on Virginia Water; Belvidere Fort, which was formerly a tea-room of the Duke of Cumberland's; the artificial ruin, which is formed chiefly of capitals, columns, and other architectural fragments from Tripoli, porphyry, granite, and marble; and the boathouse, hermitage, floating bridge and rustic bridge at the foot of the cascade. Not that I wish to speak disrespectfully of Sir James, who, in reality, was a greater architect—certainly if tried by the test of utility—than most people take him to be. He has made Windsor Castle the most homelike and enjoyable of great palaces. There is a gallery in front of the Chinese fishing-temple where, day after day, George IV., like Charles II. at Datchet, used to amuse himself with fishing. There is a battery of twenty-one guns at the Belvidere, which was used by the Duke of Cumberland in the '45 campaign. Near the cascade there is a kind of grotto, the stones of which were dug up at Bagshot Heath, and we are told that these are supposed to have been a Druidical cromlech. We must not forget the miniature frigate which floats on the water. This, I think, is a tolerably correct inventory of the properties belonging to Virginia Water.

But let it not be supposed that there is no real beauty belonging to this sheet of water. Virginia Water has been praised and loved by poets. I should hardly have imagined that Mr. Charles Knight—for whose useful literary career I entertain a sincere respect and a feeling of gratitude—should have written a poem on Virginia Water, which might well claim a place in his autobiographical volumes. He has written a poem on Virginia Water which he divides into two parts, severally on the Cascade and the Lake. With a true poetical touch, Mr. Knight has seized upon the best points of the scenery, which he accurately photographs for us.

'I love thee not the less that thou hast come
Fresh from the hand of art, a gentler thing.'

And yet, though an artificial creation, Mr. Knight does rightly in speaking of it as 'a wild and solemn scene.' The brown, rocky, mossy stones, the rank thick grass, with the frequent willow and birch, the low woods skirting the water-side, the spongy uncropped turf, the ferns and lichen, the heathery slips with the thick purple flowers, are faithfully reproduced in this little poem. He points out how

'Never mute

Is thy subduing voice; and never leafless
Are the thick firs that tower above the height
In manifold hues.'

The poetical characteristics of the artificial part of the lake are well caught up:—

'I joy to know

That tasteful memory doth dwell with thee;
That temples, graceful as thy silent waters,
Adorn thine islets; and that flowers as bright
As stars, more sweet than flowers of Araby,
Gleam 'midst thy willows. When the evening
sun
Glow in thy mirror, I may steal away
From man's loud hum, to fancy that a note
Of that soft music, clarionet and flute
And mellow horn, that soothes a monarch's
ear,
Reaches my distant longings.'

Mr. Knight speaks of the 'early joys and present hopes' associated with Virginia Water, which, for many persons, will have an increased interest from this *souvenir*; and ends with the apostrophe, 'A patriot king hath known thee.' As no date is given to the publication of the Annual, where the poem first appeared, we are unable to say to what 'patriot' king he refers; but the associations connected with our Queen are probably more multiplied, and certainly of higher worth.

The 'patriot' king associated with Virginia Water more than any other, was George IV. A good deal of the personal history of George IV. is connected herewith. He and Lady C——, 'the lady,' as she was called, used to do a good deal of fishing together on the water. There is something about it in the last volumes of the Grantley Berkeley biography, of which we lately said something in these pages. The flirtation was of a more harmless

character than is generally supposed; 'I've got a bite!' and 'So have I!' being probably the more exciting items of the conversation. The king was tired of ceremonies of state, and he liked best to abandon them altogether, and to keep the royal park to himself, and to cast a line for a fish. I am afraid that to George IV. angling was hardly what it was to the good and gentle Wotton, who fancied that it was 'a rest to his mind, a cheerer of his spirits, a diverter of sadness, a calmer of unquiet thoughts, a moderator of passions, a procurer of contentedness, and that it begat habits of peace and patience in those that professed and practised it.' As for Lady C——, Mr. Grantley Berkeley is at pains to explain that she did not use her influence either for filling her jewel-case or for pushing political objects. People chose, indeed, to be satirical, and to say ill-natured things. To quote Berkeley—'There were no lovers in the whole range of history or fiction they did not call into requisition to indicate that tender union. Lovers, however, they knew very well they were not; the idea was ludicrous and made the most of. The sly reflections on the subject that were interchanged by Freemantle and Herbert Taylor, would have created more broad grins than George Colman ever provoked in his happiest mood. The king might have been in worse hands. In truth, "the lady" did not make the capital out of her favouritism she could have done. Among the jewels presented to her were a few articles belonging to the Crown she was called upon afterwards to return. The donor, though thus imprudently liberal, did not imitate the reckless prodigality of James I., who literally cast the royal pearls before the greediest of swine. All the gifts this lady ever received from her distinguished friend would have been held by her in little estimation for their money value.' Other estimates of this person are by no means so favourable.

There is something very melancholy in the last days of George IV. In those last days he seems to have

relapsed into second childhood. He was very fond of pastry and sweet things, took a good deal of vegetables, didn't like meat, and in all respects conducted himself like a spoilt child. He no longer seemed sensual and greedy; he was an overgrown, frivolous baby. Captain Gronow, who has borne heavy testimony against George IV., and the ruin in which he involved all those who came in close contact with him, gives us a pitiable account of his last days. 'He was very fond of punch, made from a recipe by his *maître d'hôtel*, Mr. Maddison, and which he drank after dinner. This was the only time he was agreeable, and on these occasions he would sing songs, relate anecdotes of his youth, and play on the violoncello, afterwards going to bed in a "comfortable" state. But a nervous disorder which affected him prevented his sleeping well, and he invariably rose in the morning in the most unamiable of tempers. Poor man! he was greatly to be pitied; for he was surrounded by a set of harpies, only intent on what they could get out of him, among the most prominent of whom was Lady C——, the "English Pompadour." He was so morbid about being stared at, that he would dismiss the very female servants of his own establishment if they were detected in the act of looking at him, utterly setting aside the time-worn axiom that a kitten may look at a king.'

Sir Benjamin Brodie, in his Autobiography, has an interesting reference to the royal angler of Virginia Water:

'I generally went to the king's apartments about ten o'clock in the morning, and sat by his bedside for one or two hours before my departure, during which he conversed on various subjects, not unfrequently speculating on his own condition and prospects. In his more sanguine moments his mind would revert to the cottage which he had built at Windsor Park, and he expressed the pleasure which it would afford him to return to this his favourite retreat, as if he had found the comparatively retired life which he had led then much more suited

to his taste than the splendour of Windsor Castle. The impression made on my mind by the very limited observation which I was able to make on these occasions was, that the king would have been a happier and a better man if it had been his lot to be nothing more than a simple country gentleman instead of being in the exalted position which he inherited.'

In my morning ramble I was accidentally joined by a very old man who was staying at the inn, just the sort of old man who ought to turn up at opportune moments with useful information, but who, as a matter of fact, are not generally met with as required. He told me he remembered the place an immense number of years ago, sixty I think, when of course it was very different to what it was at present. He was coming down on a journey from the north, and he should never forget his first acquaintance with the cascade. He had known it very well ever since from peculiar circumstances. Yes, he said, it was a great pity that no boats were allowed on the lake for the use of the public. Applications had been repeatedly made to the proper officials, who had replied that the matter should be taken into consideration, but the considering people had not yet taken off their considering caps. Who was the official, the ranger? No; there was no ranger now, none since the time of the Prince Consort. It was a goodly rangership, and the Queen was doubtless keeping it for one of her younger sons. Then of course there was great admiration expressed for the Prince Consort in his capacity as ranger. The Queen drove along every now and then. Bless you, he had known the Queen ever since she was *that* high. He used to keep an inn on a certain road between London and the coast, and whenever the Duchess of Kent went abroad she used to put up at his house, and he used to make friends with the young Princess and gather posies for them. If ever he

had an opportunity he would remind her Majesty of that fact. The misfortune was that he was never likely to have an opportunity. Yes, there was plenty of game in those woods down by the water. He only wished he could blaze away at it. That, he thought, was a privilege conceded to very few, certainly not to the likes of him or me. Other gossip did this worthy old man dis-course to me, and, generally speaking, the people in the Windsor localities are very ready and proud to tell anything they know about the royal family at the Castle. They are capital customers at the Windsor shops. If any of the royal family are making purchases when strangers enter, they are careful not to attract any attention by voice or manner.

At certain times Virginia Water is inundated by visitors. I should think that this would be especially the case in the Ascot week, for the 'Wheatsheaf' is very handy for Ascot. The Ascot races were founded by that Duke of Cumberland, uncle of George III., to whom we have already referred in this brief paper. The 'Quarterly Review' says that he became possessed of the best stock, the best blood, and the most numerous stud in the kingdom. He was the breeder of Eolipse. When Windsor Forest, once a hundred and twenty miles in circuit, was in great part disafforested, Ascot and its avenues were to be kept and continued for racing purposes. Many are the pleasure parties that come down to Ascot; and it is delightful to think what easy access the hot, tired Londoners possess to some of the choicest parts of English scenery. But what pleased me most was to know that a young new-married couple came to Virginia Water for a day, and lingered and lingered on week after week. I think this speaks well for the real beauty and romance that belong to the scenery. To them this Great Park was doubtless an Eden, and this Virginia Water as the rivers of Paradise.

PICKED UP IN THE ROW.

A Story founded on Fact.

AN ominous cloud had been gradually growing up from the western horizon, and at last had crept over the face of the sun and hidden him from sight. But the riders and walkers took no notice—as who ever does take notice when Pleasure is at the helm?—of the coming shower, but laughed and chatted as though it were the first day they had come into the beautiful world and were to last for ever. A brave sight Rotten Row was that morning, a sight such as is not to be matched in any other corner of the world. The ride was filled with a dense crowd. The lovely English girls, flushed with the exercise, passed by like goddesses on their beautiful English horses, while ever and anon a low musical laugh broke on the hum of conversation, which the stillness of the air—the sure presage of a storm—rendered sensible. Among them and beside them rode the cavaliers, now restraining with firm hand the impetuosity of their horses, now, perchance, bending low in whispers not meant for the common ear. The flower of the gentlemen of England were there. The Heir Apparent to the throne, at their head, cantered down the Row on his favourite grey, through a grove of doffed hats, returning with scrupulous consideration every salute made to him. Chancellors of the Exchequer, past and present, were there, seeking relief from official toil and a renewal of strength to deal with dull, dry figures. Civil servants were there, riding off the effects of breakfast, before giving themselves up to the crushing labour of their respective offices. Ambassadors, *attachés*, and secretaries of legation were there, intent on performing the agreeable duties of society which are so large a part of their business. Idle elder sons with titles and estates were there, smiling and happy in the consciousness of a balance on the right side at their banker's. Idle younger sons without title or estates

too were there, not less smiling and happy, though with the consciousness of a balance on the wrong side at their tailor's. All the various elements of which fashionable society is composed, in fact, were there, cantering, trotting, walking, and following out, meantime, each one his own particular scheme of love, pleasure, or business. Those who were not riding, sauntered up and down the side-walk, or lounged upon the iron chairs which the far-seeing enterprise of a considerate speculator had provided for their use. The walk itself stretched from Apsley House to the Serpentine like a gay and living parterre, and, by the brilliancy and freshness of the toilettes, in which white of course predominated, served to form a contrast with the more sombre hues of the riders, with whom at a hundred points it was holding gay and animated converse, caressing with delicately-gloved hand the shining coats of the horses, looking up from under hats with temerity or from under infinitesimal bonnets with timidity, and betraying, in spite of all efforts, the hopes and fears, the agitations and delights which go to make up the old, old tale of love. To the most superficial observer the scene is delightful; but how much more delightful to him who lives behind the scenes—who holds the key to each one of the little dramas that are being enacted around—who can trace to its source the expression on each face, and appreciate the force of situations which to the gallery appear commonplace. He knows why Miss Lane puts down her veil when poor young Rasper comes by; why Sir John, her father, breaks into a canter when the Marquis has passed them; and why young Rasper, who is counted a good rider, gets cannoned against and objurgated for not looking where he is going to. He knows why Clara Westland has come out alone with the groom, and why she rides right along to Queen's Gate, where no-

body ever goes. He also knows why that young scamp Tom Ruffler likes to stand down in the same direction, under a tree, in order to admire the progress of the Albert Memorial. He knows, too, why handsome Jack Fairfax is talking politics to the wicked old Adullamite Lord Swansdown, in a loud voice, on one side, and something else, in a lower tone, to the daughter, Lady Jane, on the other. He knows why Jack suddenly recognises somebody he never saw before, in the side-walk, when poor Miss Julia Morton passes him; and he understands why Julia insists on going home to lunch, although it is not yet one o'clock.

Thinking of all these things, and taking credit to myself for being a philosopher, and so moved myself by none of them, I was walking my horse quietly along and reflecting with, economical regret upon the damage I was doing to the brim of my hat, in the performance of the half-summersault which represents the only proper mode of saluting ladies,—when, suddenly, in the middle of my fortieth bow, I was conscious of a great movement among the riders, and at the same instant an enormous rain-drop fell exactly on the top of my uncovered head. The shower was coming at last, and its advent was like the irruption of a hawk into a nest of doves. Every rider put spurs to his or her horse and started off at full gallop, some for shelter and the more timid for home. It was a perfect stampede; and the mounted policemen who had been stationed in the Row that morning, for the first time, to prevent 'furious riding,' looked on helplessly, not knowing what course it would be proper to take consistently with their instructions when everybody was riding furiously. My old hunter Charlie pricked up his ears at the unwonted movement, and thinking, probably, that there was a fox somewhere, or reflecting, possibly, that the time had arrived for being frightened, began to plunge and rear violently, which, for him, is so extraordinary a proceeding that I indulged him with the spur as an

encouragement, when he bolted forward and all but carried me through a party, consisting of two ladies and two gentlemen, immediately in front. I turned to apologize, and saw that one of the gentlemen was Fred Fellowes, who was looking quite radiant and smiling,—the ladies I did not know. Nevertheless, I had seen them riding every day through the season, and, in common with others, had remarked the singular beauty of the younger one, who was a beautiful blonde, with a white transparent complexion, a wealth of hair of a pure golden hue, and limpid blue eyes bearing a constant air of surprised candour. The little mouth, with its thin lips, was in constant though almost imperceptible movement, and evidenced—as the mouth does more than any other feature of the face—a high intelligence, while the dainty nostrils ever and anon dilated with something like scorn, and the eyes flashed with a light quite surprising as a contrast to the simplicity of the same face when in repose.

It must not be supposed that I noticed all this at that moment, for, in fact, I had been studying the face all through the season, and had come to the conclusion that it was the most beautiful to be seen in the Park. Nobody seemed to know the young lady or her mother, and I was astonished to see Fred riding with them, because I had often mentioned them to him and been met by the commonplaces which it is proper to debit about people one does not know. I pulled up under a tree, and the whole party passed me, but immediately afterwards Fred doffed his hat, and leaving the rest, who went on towards Albert Gate, came and joined me with the air of a man perfectly contented and happy with himself and all the world.

'Your bay is quite skittish to-day,' said he. 'You nearly galloped over me.'

'That would have been a pity, under the circumstances. So you know the *blondinette*, eh?'

'Yes,' he answered, smiling; 'I know her—a little.'

'Just like you—sly dog! You've

got a monopoly of her acquaintance, eh?"

'No; not quite. There's one other fellow who is not likely to forget her.'

'How did you get introduced to her?'

'I introduced myself; or, rather, she introduced herself.'

'Threw herself into your arms, eh?'

'You've literally hit it. But it is a long story; and as I want to tell it you, suppose you come to my rooms and have some lunch.'

The proposal exactly suited me. So we went down Constitution Hill at a hand gallop through the rain, pulled up at the door of Fred's rooms, and gave our horses to the groom who was in waiting. Fred's rooms are the most delightful bachelor quarters in London, and, at the same time, the most tasteful. And after luncheon we lit the cigar of peace; and sitting over a bottle of the most irreproachable Amontillado in the softest of easy chairs, and watching lazily through the open window the crowd of people sunning themselves, after the shower, along Pall Mall, Fred told me the history of his new acquaintance.

'You know, my dear fellow,' he said, 'that I am not, as some of my friends are' (and here he looked at me, though for what reason I can't possibly conceive), 'a general lover; in fact, I am so far behind the age that I can safely say I never had a flirtation in my life. The fact is, I got tired of the regular London girls almost before I knew them. They are too grand, too insolent, and too conscious of what they deserve in the way of settlements for me. I wandered about, therefore, with my fancy busy in forming the ideal I longed for; and at last I fancied I had gained such a perfect idea of what she must be like, that I should know her as soon as I saw her—that is to say, if I ever did see her, which I soon gave up hoping. Well, one day I was riding down the Row at a canter, looking over the people walking; and as I passed the celebrities of the season, blessing my stars that I had fallen in love with none of them. Suddenly I

heard a little stifled scream behind me on the off side, and an exclamation—"Mamma! what shall I do?—the saddle is slipping off." I turned in my seat, and there, close behind me, I saw two ladies, of whom the nearest was in the act of pulling up her horse, while the saddle, badly girthed, was slipping, and the lady with it, towards the ground. In an instant I pulled up my horse on his haunches, sprung from my saddle on the wrong side, made a half turn, and just caught her in my arms as she was helplessly falling off. I placed her safely on the ground, and turning to the horse, put the saddle back into its place, and tightened the girths. Then, for the first time, I looked at the young lady. Well, my dear fellow, I won't tell you, because I can't, the impression she produced upon me. All I can remember is, that it seemed to grow upon me suddenly that here at last was the ideal I had been for ever seeking, and I stood looking at her, quite speechless.'

'And devoutly wishing, I suppose, that you'd got to catch her in your arms again,' I broke in.

'No; I seemed to be lost in contemplation of her. She blushed, and stooped to arrange her riding-habit. Recalled to myself, I assisted her to remount; and thinking then, for the first time, of my own horse, I found that a groom had taken charge of him. I remounted and said a few words—I hardly know what—expressive of a hope that the young lady was not hurt. The elder lady, who, evidently, from the likeness, was her mother, then began to thank me for the assistance I had rendered; while I, having somewhat recovered my presence of mind, rode on—only too glad of the opportunity—at her side, disclaiming, at rather more length than perhaps was quite necessary, any merit at all in the case, and expressing, as pointedly as I could, my gratitude to the happy chance which had enabled me to assist her daughter in any way. She smiled at the word daughter; and as I still rode on by her side, she asked, might she know to whom

she was to feel indebted for the timely help given to her daughter. Only too pleased, I gave my name; at which she smiled again. "I think I know some of your family. Is not your uncle a neighbour of mine, in Gloucestershire?" she asked. I replied that I had an uncle in Gloucestershire. "Then," said she, "you surely must have heard him mention his neighbours, the Flaxtons." I replied that I had; and Mrs. Flaxton, as I now made her out to be, resumed—"I hope, then, you will call upon us, and give my husband an opportunity of thanking you for the assistance you so opportunely rendered to Constance." As this was evidently a *congé*, I turned my horse homewards with a last parting glance and bow to Constance, as I already called her to myself. The next day I passed in longing for four o'clock to come; and after taking nearly an hour to dress myself, I realized for the first time the fact that I had not a single necktie, coat, or pair of gloves that suited me; that my boots were too large, my hat too low, and my general appearance as unsatisfactory as possible. However, I took heart, walked to the house, and, strange to say, found them at home, Constance looking even more beautiful in her light summer dress, and with her glorious hair uncovered, than in her riding-habit, which for any other woman would, I take it, be simply an impossibility. I did my best to make myself agreeable, but went away in half an hour, conscious that my best had been a lamentable failure, and utterly disgusted with myself. Two days after they asked me to dinner, the next day to lunch; and very soon scarcely a morning passed that I did not ride with them, or an evening that I did not see them. All this time was delicious to me. I was drinking in deep draughts of the sweet poison of love, and I could not help thinking that Constance herself was not untouched by my evident assiduities. Yet now and then she would suddenly break off in the midst of a conversation and turn her head away in confusion for

a moment, while the sorrowful, pitying look with which she would again meet me was as alarming as it was inexplicable. Thus I went on, alternately hoping and fearing, till at length I could bear it no longer, and resolved to know my fate. Do you remember how I worried your mother to get me a card for Lady Swansdown's ball?

'I thought that you were rather anxious about it—for you.'

'It was because I knew she was to be there. I arrived at half-past ten o'clock, and was stared at by the link-man as though I were an extinct animal. I was made to dance the first quadrille, I remember, for the first time in my life. After that I resolutely stood in the doorway watching the arrivals. At last I saw the little fair head gleaming in the crowd of people coming up-stairs. I made my way to her and asked for the next dance, but with no thought of dancing. I led her through the ball-rooms, to the little boudoir—you know it, hung with blue silk—at the end of them, and then and there, trembling with emotion and hardly knowing what I said, I whispered the burning words, the hopes and wishes that had been so long on my lips. For an instant she stood quite still, and I pressed the arm which still lay within mine, and clasped her hand. Her head drooped; she disengaged her hand and stood before me with her eyes cast down, "Mr. Fellowes," she said simply, "I am engaged to be married." I was thunderstruck. The room seemed to turn round with me, and feeling that in an instant I should fall, I dropped rather than sat on one of the couches. She uttered an exclamation of alarm which roused me, and rising again, I took her hand and kissed it: then making a supreme effort, I hurried out from the room, and rushing down stairs left the house, feeling as if my heart would break. When I got home I remember I sat down and instinctively lit a cigar. It was a long time before I could actually realize that Constance was lost to me for ever: I had waited but for her to give me some hope—that hope had been given in a thousand ways—and even now I said to myself,

and savagely repeated it, that I was sure she loved me. I felt angry with her, too, that she had not told me this before. Then I made excuse for her and cursed myself for an idiot. I can't tell you, my dear fellow, what I went through that night, and if I could, I wouldn't, for you would think me mad. The next day, although it was the middle of the season, I went down to Scotland. In a week's time, however, I tired of that. I always thought of her whether walking through the heather, wading in salmon streams, or sitting, as I did, for hours together, under huge cairns, listless and idle. The longing to see her once more was, at last, too much for me, and I started off suddenly one morning, caught the mail train, and that evening was in London again. The next morning I mounted my old horse once more and went out, as usual, to the Row. After riding up and down several times, at last I met her face to face. She turned deadly pale and I saw the thin under lip quiver and the teeth meet in it. I simply raised my hat, and we passed each other; but I saw her no more that morning. After that I never missed riding in the Row a single day: sometimes I met her, sometimes not, and when we did meet, I used to think that she looked as if she pitied me. I tell you, my dear fellow, I lived on those looks. I could not make out who it was she was engaged to, as she seemed to ride as little with one gentleman as with another, nor, indeed, did I care much to know. It was enough for me that I had lost her; and I had never thought that I should feel for any woman what I felt when I remembered that.

'One evening, on going home to dress, I found a note upon my table. I looked at it carefully, and at once recognized her cipher. I was positively afraid to open it. At last I broke the seal, and imagine my astonishment when I found it contained an invitation to dinner for the next day, with the time, half-past seven, doubly underlined. I could not comprehend it, and my first idea was to refuse. I reflected, however,

that it could not have been mere heartlessness which induced them to ask me. They were probably leaving town, and her mother had asked me without speaking to her. I could not resist the idea of seeing her once more, perhaps of sitting beside her, and I at once wrote and accepted.

'Next day, as the clock struck the half-hour, I arrived at their door in Lowndes Square. The servant seemed rather surprised to see me, but showed me up into the drawing-room, shaking himself into his coat by the way. She was there alone, and rose to receive me as I entered the room. She was smiling, and her face was lit up with a curious expression which I could not fathom.

' "I thought you would be punctual," she said. "Of course we don't dine till eight."

'I bowed and stood there, not knowing what to say or think. She went on—

' "I underscored half-past seven, because I wanted to relate an anecdote to you," and as she said this her lip curled, her nostrils dilated, and her whole face assumed an expression of the most profound scorn. "Will you not sit down?" she asked in an altered manner. Mechanically I sat down, and she continued: "You were not riding yesterday morning, as usual?"

' "No. I——"

' "It is a pity you were not. You would have seen, as I did, an instance of courage and presence of mind quite surprising. There was a gentleman cantering slowly down the Row with a lady, when his horse, not knowing probably the ability of his rider, began to canter rather faster than he contemplated or wished, and finally broke into a gallop. The gentleman pulled at the reins—which I understand is the way horses are usually stopped or made to go more slowly—but in this case the horse did not seem to mind it, for he galloped as fast as before, or, if anything, faster. Are you listening?" I bowed. "Now his rider was a young man of great coolness and judgment, and he said to himself, 'It is quite clear that my horse and I are of different

opinions as to speed, and unless I take precautions it is probable that some accident will ensue.' He therefore proceeded to take the precautions which appeared to be necessary in such a case. He first of all took his feet out of the stirrups, but the horse nevertheless galloped on faster than ever. The next precaution he took was to throw away the reins, but that, too, failed to stop his career. He then leant coolly and calmly forward and seized the horse's mane, sitting, at the same time, as nearly on his neck as he could. Yet all this was of no avail, and as by this time he was tearing at full speed down the Row, he again reflected and said to himself, 'One only other precaution remains now to be taken, and that is, to fall off.' And fall off he did with great care and judgment, on his head. The horse ran on and was stopped by Apeley House. His hat was picked up at the other end of the Row. Both were brought to him as he was wiping the mud off his face and coat, in the expectation that he would remount. But here, again, his coolness and judgment did not desert him. 'Take the horse away,' he faltered, 'I would rather not ride him again;' and in spite of the jeers and taunts of the crowd, he walked away home, following his own groom on the horse. What do you think of my tale, Mr. Fellowes?"

'Astounded to hear her talk thus,

and with so much scorn and animation, I remained silent.

"You will see," she resumed, "it shows the fallibility of all human precautions, and it is painful to think that the gentleman I have been telling you of did not save himself from accident, although he took the precaution of showing himself in his true colours as a fool and a coward. Mr. Fellowes, I was engaged to be married to that gentleman, but after what I saw this morning, I would rather die than become his wife."

'It all broke upon me now. The next moment I had seized her hand and was pleading for myself with all the words I could find; and when her mother came down I made my demand and then and there was accepted. We are going to be married in a fortnight, and I want you to be best man. We shall take a house in Leicestershire this winter and we'll give you a mount whenever you like to come down.'

I consented, and as it was late I left Fred to a private contemplation of his happy prospects and walked home, thinking that the young lady had treated her first lover rather badly in throwing him over because he couldn't ride. I delicately said so to Fred when I next saw him: he replied—

'She only did what the horse did.'

BLANC-BEL.

A FATAL STEP.

I'M not the sort of man, you know,
 Who sentimentalizes often ;
 But this, believe me, was a blow
 Demanding change of air to soften.
 The girl was lovely as a grace ;
 Her dress the sweetest ever put on.
 I set my heart upon her face—
 Her dress I only set my foot on.

It *was* a silly step to take ;
 And half the room was in a titter
 (A fact which merely serves to make
 Remorse additionally bitter).
 Those trains are utterly absurd ;
 I wonder why the women wear them.
 They seem designed, upon my word,
 For folks to tread upon and tear them.

She turned, and gave me *such* a glance ;
 She smiled ; but oh ! in *such* a manner.
 Farewell, said I, my only chance
 Of Coote or Godfrey, Strauss or Lanner.
 I think I blushed—I know I bowed
 And raised my erring patent-leather ;
 Laid half the blame upon the crowd,
 And half upon the sultry weather.

I stayed an hour ; I talked a bit
 With Guards and people from the City.
 My hearers, when I made a hit,
 Were kind enough to think me witty.
 They little knew, good easy men,
 The pangs that lay beneath my laughter—
 Pangs that were only stifled *then*
 To sting the more for ever after.

The season's nearly at an end
 (There's joy, at least, in *that* reflection !)
 A continental tour may tend
 To dull the edge of recollection.
 I might, perchance, in other climes
 Forget my sense of self-abhorrence ;
 Should Peace return with better times
 d clear again the way to Florence.

H. S. L.

DRESS.

'Twas whispered in Paris, 'twas said in Pall Mall,
And "Descou" grew faint at the sound as it fell.'

THAT the days of crinoline were numbered. It was said at the beginning of the season that the decree had gone forth from the imperial throne at the Tuileries, and that its sentence had been passed. We were incredulous at the time, because a similar report had been current at various times, and this seemed likely to be another of the many illustrations of the old fable of the boy and the wolf. Still there were indications of a coming change, which made it appear not quite so improbable as it might otherwise have been. In the first place, it had had a longer reign than any other fashion; and, in the second, the Empress of the French, who was not only the originator of it, but also gives the key-note of fashion throughout Europe, was said to have discarded it for her evening toilette. Besides which, here and there, some of the more advanced guard appeared in public somewhat shorn of their dimensions. We were thus prepared to expect a considerable revolution in dress; but the crinoline, or cage, or steel petticoat, has taken a deeper hold upon the popular prejudice than fashions ordinarily do, and it will be no easy matter to displace it. There is not a scullion or maid-of-all-work that has not her 'dress improver,' as it used to be called in some slop-shops; and even the Irish peasant-girls are taking kindly to it. Besides which, with all its inconveniences and absurdities, upon which every one can dilate, the crinoline is not without its uses. In what other way, by what other means can the long trailing skirts of the present day be kept out of the dirt and filth of the London pavement? How ladies can consent to do the work of scavengers is a problem which they alone can solve. If this is one of the evils of the present fashion, it would be increased a hundredfold if the crinoline were discarded. That it is universally adopted, and has its advan-

tages, militate considerably against its disuse. It must be a long time before it is discontinued, especially when even such a high authority as the Empress of the French goes no further than to sanction only a partial discontinuance of it. How far ladies will gain by such a compromise is a very doubtful question, because no one whose circumference has been, of later years, an 'unknown quantity,' will like to appear suddenly before the world as a whipping-post, shorn of half her splendour; nor can we imagine a lady who is continually oscillating between crinoline and no crinoline otherwise than deeply perplexed at her own identity. The complications to which it must lead in the wardrobe department must be almost incalculable, involving additional expense where it is already profuse. If the transition is to be gradual, which the report implied, and if our nerves are to be spared the shock of any plainer indications of the lines of beauty, by ladies wearing numberless petticoats, starched *à l'outrance* and flounced up to the knee, in lieu of the one discarded crinoline, we doubt whether they will be glad of the exchange. We have been told of a race that was run between two ladies, one of whom, for the moment, laid aside her crinoline. She found that she could not run, that her petticoats impeded her, while her adversary had no difficulty in winning the race, as her crinoline secured to her the free use of her limbs. But they who rail against the prevailing fashion have abundant excuse for doing so if only the frequent accidents to which it leads are taken into account. In cases of fire it has not only been the immediate cause of the calamity, but has also mainly interfered with all the efforts to extinguish it.

That a wail and a lament should be raised by the report to which we have alluded, is not surprising, for

the majority are not remarkable for beauty of form and outline; and they who have been able to screen themselves and their imperfections behind a fashion which makes all women the same from their waist downwards, will not be slow to resist a change which bodes them so little good. One thing, however, is quite clear, that milliners, dress-makers, and silk-mercers are determined not to lose; for we are assured that what is lost in breadth will be made up in length—that in future ladies will be ‘length without breadth.’ The inordinate length of the kind of dress which has prevailed in Paris has given rise to the name of ‘*queue à la comète*.’ One of three things must necessarily follow from this—either that even the smallest drums must be like royal processions, if due space is to be allotted to the spreading of ladies’ tails; or ladies must follow the example of our great-grandmothers, who looped up their skirts through their pocket-holes to keep them out of their neighbours’ way; or we must all walk up the ladies’ backs—pleasant alternative! and one for which we shall, no doubt, meet with our just retribution in the shape of those ugly words which have been known to fall from even the prettiest lips—but there will be no help for it, and the blame will not be ours.

The whole question of dress is perplexing. It is one which occupies the whole time and all the thought of some ladies, who make it as much a study as if their very existence depended upon it, and who would fain persuade the world and themselves that it is a form and expression of art. To dress well, to dress expensively, to dress with an originality and peculiarity that shall not offend, is to some the height of ambition. One desires to make herself remarkable for being ‘well dressed,’ ‘in such perfect taste;’ another for the costliness of her lace, her brocades, and the magnificence of her jewels; a third for her superiority over the rest of the world in following a line of her own. Another claims for herself the consideration due to an ‘*artiste*’ with classical tendencies; another desires only to

attract remark, and another to suggest a claim to some literary reputation. They who really care about dress have theories of their own, and fashion draws the line within which it is safe to theorize.

The multitude, however, will follow the fashion with a scrupulous fidelity. They will go to some first-rate milliner, such as Descou, if they can afford it, and, placing themselves in her hands, will get ‘rigged out’ in the newest and most approved style. They are, in fact, nothing more than living lay-figures for the dress-makers to cover according to their own fancy and caprice. It has been recorded of one leader of fashion, who is conspicuous for her success, that, before she finally decides upon any costume she proposes to wear, she has it all put upon a lay-figure, that she may be able to form a tolerably correct idea of its effect. It is quite astonishing what fine ladies will submit to in order to acquire a reputation for being in the fashion, and to secure being well dressed. It is said that one of the most popular dressmakers in Paris is a man who provides the whole costume, and whose word is law. When the dress is finished and sent home, the lady is expected to present herself before him *en grande tenue*, while he studies the effect of his handiwork, and nods his approval, or suggests some alteration which no one ever dares to disobey.

It must not be supposed that we dispute the wisdom, and, indeed, duty, of paying some attention to dress. We are no advocates for slovenliness, which, nine times out of ten, indicates an ill-ordered mind; just as an ill assortment of colours, or a bad selection of materials, suggests some defect of eye or taste, and may be the outward expression of a vulgar mind. There may be a considerable amount of conceit and affectation, underlying a disregard for personal appearance, which is quite as reprehensible as its opposite vice. We remember an instance in which the wife of a millionaire invariably attended the smartest morning-parties dressed like a charity-school girl. It could not

have been a question of necessary economy. It might have been intended as a tacit rebuke to the rest of the giddy, gaily-dressed world, who fluttered like butterflies in the sunshine of prosperity; but it always savoured of a certain kind of conceit not very far removed from self-righteousness and Pharisaism. Such instances are, however, very rare, because few like to make such a sacrifice of their personal appearance, even to acquire a reputation for piety and self-mortification. In these days especially, when the love of dress pervades every class, and every facility is afforded to those who wish to indulge their taste, we need not be apprehensive of any culpable indifference to it. The error is not likely to be on this side, but on its opposite. Exaggeration in style, in *luxure* in expense, is the prevailing evil. The caprice of the fair sex is fostered and encouraged by the endless changes which are made; and our eyes are no sooner accustomed to one fashion, than it is displaced by another. The accounts which we have received of the balls which were given in Paris during the last season show what has been the progress of *luxure* in dress. It was said that one of the ladies of the court appeared as an archangel (!) in a short tunic, with wings of white feathers which formed an arch over her head and came down to her knees, and with a steel sword which she held in her ungloved hand while she danced. Madame de Galifet has thus prepared us to expect, on some future occasion, a representation of the different orders of the heavenly inhabitants. Perhaps the lower region will have its representatives also—a more easy matter, no doubt; and who knows but what we shall hear, ere long, of a tableau of our first parents, *en costume*, driven out of the garden of Eden by the angelic Marquise with sword in hand?

There never was a time when personal adornment was more a study and an art than it has now become. The consequence of this is that it has reached such a climax in expense as to alarm all but millionaires. The endless variety which

is considered requisite for a well-dressed woman, the richness of the materials, and the enormous quantity that is considered necessary, makes it impossible for moderate incomes to meet the demands made upon them on the score of dress. If there is a disinclination to wear the same dress twice, it is not difficult to imagine that wardrobes must soon outgrow all reasonable dimensions, and that the accumulation of debt will keep pace with the accumulation of dresses. It is, of course, exceedingly difficult to lay down any rules by which the expensiveness of dress may be diminished; and it would, moreover, be very presumptuous in us to pretend to legislate upon so important a subject; but we think that all will agree with us in saying that the regard now paid to dress is extravagant in every sense of the word, and that ladies should adopt some plan by which the lavish expenditure involved in it may be curtailed within reasonable limits. It is almost certain that the love of dress, which so engrosses the thoughts of many, must tend to deterioration of character, for it is impossible to suffer the mind to dwell upon unworthy subjects without loss. The intellectual powers are lowered and frittered away; and the enormous sums which are recklessly lavished upon personal adornment must diminish the means of usefulness, and be at the cost and sacrifice of many known duties. Look at it as we may, the excessive regard for dress is injurious; and they who have acquired a reputation for being well dressed, are unwilling to forfeit any of the *prestige* which it gives them. In France, and, no doubt, in England too, people will make great sacrifices for their personal appearance, illustrating the old saying, *il faut souffrir pour être belle*; but, whatever they may be willing to bear on their own account, they have certainly no right to make others suffer for their whims and caprices.

In order to meet some of the many difficulties which surrounded the case, and to protect the needlewomen from the inconsiderateness

of their employers, who are too apt to defer giving their orders until the eleventh hour, a society was formed with the intention of reducing the cost of dress, and of introducing a system of ready-money payments. It was placed under episcopal jurisdiction—perhaps because the bishops themselves wear petticoats and muslin sleeves; and the Bishop of Oxford consented to be patron, or director. What the result has been, and how far it has answered its purpose, we cannot say; but every one will hail it as a blessing if it should be able to restrain the expenses of the ‘toilette.’ Among the many devices which were said to have been adopted, was one which seems to us to savour more of Monmouth Street than Belgrave Square. We allude to the plan of hiring their dresses, which was laid to the charge of some distinguished votaries of fashion. A definite sum was paid for a certain quantity and quality of fine clothes, which the wearers agreed to return to the dressmaker who provided them. By this arrangement a certain amount of novelty was secured; but it never sounded like either a comfortable or a creditable arrangement.

Why dress should be so expensive seems to depend upon the tendencies of the ladies themselves; for, with a moderate amount of care, there can be no reason why it should be so ruinous as it is said to be. Of course the enormous quantity which is required for a gown makes the expense considerably greater than it used to be some twenty years ago; but then, on the other hand, the choice and beauty of cheap materials is much greater, and we have seen some most effective ‘toilettes’ made out of very inexpensive materials. It mainly depends upon the style and the cut, and if these are good, and the lady’s-maid is up to her work and has been well trained, the chances are that she will be able to produce a better result than nine-tenths of the professed dressmakers, whose object is to swell the account with trimmings of all kinds, and to make out of their employers as large a profit as they can. Of course the

home-made article requires the presiding eye and judgment of the lady herself. If she should, fortunately, possess a fine taste, the result will be good; but if she should be too much of a ‘fine lady’ to trouble herself about it, it is more than probable that it will be a failure, and in that case she must make up her mind to pay the penalty of her fineladyism by being either ill dressed or by having a heavy bill at her milliner’s.

At one time there were indications of a still greater change than seems at all likely to arise. We heard that the old fashions of the First Empire were to be revived in short waists and skimp petticoats; but this is too hideous to have any prospect of success, and the prevailing amplitude of skirts is in itself a denial of the report. It was said further that all kinds of vagaries about boots were coming into fashion, which suggested short petticoats, and an amount of display from which the majority would shrink as having nothing worth showing: and we think that if the Empress were to put the question to the test, and were to adopt [the Emperor’s hobby of the plebiscite, she would find the popular mind to be in favour of crinolines and long petticoats.

In dress, as in everything else, exaggeration is the one thing to be avoided. Yet there are those who cannot be happy unless they are launching into some extreme. In the young this is unpardonable, because they always look best in the most simple attire. There is a beauty in youth itself which needs no adventitious ornament. For dowagers and married women it is another story. They may have to repair the ravages of time, or to conceal imperfections which in youth were overlooked. But even they only make matters worse if they attract attention to themselves by the exaggerated use of any prevailing fashion. If it is easy for the young to dress well, because nothing comes amiss to them, it is difficult for their elders to do so, who will not accept the fact that they are no longer young. There is a great art in being able to recognise one’s po-

sition, be it what it may. The sight of an old woman, wrinkled and grey, decked out in every colour of the rainbow, and adorned with artificial flowers, affecting a youth which has slipped away from her long ago, is enough to make one sad; while there is something attractive in the sight of one who does not care to fight against her age and infirmities, but who, dressing simply, soberly, and quietly, accepts gracefully the fact that she is old, and can discern a merit and a blessing in those 'quiet days.'

But of all the fashions which prevail none offends against good taste so much as that of dyeing and powdering the hair. That old women should wear false hair or dye their own is not surprising, because few like to proclaim the fact that they are no longer young; but why the young should best such great pains to disfigure themselves is incomprehensible. To our eyes there is nothing more beautiful or more *distingué* than a well-shaped head well set on, with the hair glossy and 'well groomed' and braided so as to set off the intellectual development of the forehead. But when the hair is drawn off the forehead like a Chinese, and is frizzled out that it may appear rough and untidy—more like a crow's nest than anything else—and chignons, true or false, fill up the whole space at the back of the head, it matters very little whether heads are large or small. It is astonishing how people can be flattered into following an absurd fashion. It is enough to praise the 'points' of the forehead to induce a lady to suffer her hair to be dragged off it. If the forehead is naturally high it is affirmed to be a beauty which must not be concealed; if it be low

it is said to be improved by the same process, so that all are eventually brought under it, and no one is allowed to adopt that style which best suits her own particular kind of beauty. We cannot understand why people should be such slaves to fashion, and may not be at liberty to follow their own bent. Of course we do not deny that there should be certain limits beyond which no one should go. For instance, 'bloomers' and others ought to be forced to give up their eccentricities, and they who show a disposition to dress after some classical statue ought also to yield their bias. But we maintain that within certain prescribed limits every one should be allowed the free exercise of her own judgment. It may be that that judgment will be at fault; yet, if so, it may be improved by coming in contact with refinement and good taste, which are, after all, the best safeguards against failure and absurdities. We read, in Mr. Baker's account of his travels in Africa, that he met with some savages who disfigured their hair by dyeing it with ochre, so that it would seem that the fashionable lady of the nineteenth century is, after all, returning to the barbaric custom of dyeing the hair. As the wind has set in that direction, who knows but what we may hear of ladies dyeing their teeth or tattooing their faces? The old proverb that there is nothing new under the sun is verified every day, and never more than when we find 'fine ladies' taking a leaf out of the book of the wild savages in Africa. 'Extremes meet' indeed when the exquisites of the nineteenth century are found copying the barbarous customs of the uncivilized races.



THE GAMBLER'S CAPITAL :—MONACO.

'What Roman strength Turbia showed
In ruin, by the mountain road ;
How like a gem beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glowed.'

Tennyson.

THERE it lies, a striking object if you are yachting about in the neighbouring Mediterranean waters, the ancient citadel on the immemorial rock, Monaco. Instead of yachting, you are perhaps one of the gay crowd, who every day sail from Nice to Monaco, in the boat which M. Blanc has lately chartered from the Messageries Impériales. Or if you are travelling on the Corniche road between Nice and Mentone, the most glorious bit of the whole Riviera, you obtain a peculiarly beautiful view, that of the laureate's lines above; the time-worn castle, the rock projecting into the sea, the towers, the fortifications, the little port, the quiet bay. If you are mounted on a mule or are a fair pedestrian, you can descend from the road below Turbia, but in an ordinary carriage, owing to the steepness of the pass you round by way of Mentone. By-and-by the road will be constructed which is provided for by treaty, and in course of time the railway will be carried on to Genoa. That sunny curve of coast between Nice and Mentone, fringed by the intensest blue of all blue seas, and backed by the snowy height of the maritime Alps, is veritably *la petite Afrique*, and is thronged with all those beauties which Goethe so musically describes in Mignon's song. In the ancient principality of Monaco, the smallest of all European states, Monaco was the capital and Mentone the principal town of the small dominion, and when we add the village of Roccabruna, we have made up the whole of the little principality prior to its dismemberment. Roccabruna is a little village a few miles from Mentone, where you may still detect the remains of a ruined castle and towers. It is embowered in a forest of citrons, golden fruits amid their odorous snows, which constitute both the

charm and the wealth of the region. Between Monaco and Mentone there has always been considerable rivalry. Monaco prided itself on being the abode of a long line of princes, and 'the seat of government,' if we may apply that stately phrase to the capital of Lilliput. Mentone opposed to this ancient grandeur the flush of its modern prosperity; for Monaco is at times comparatively bleak and exposed, and Nice does not escape the mistral. But Mentone gaily blossoms deep into the winter amid the gardens of lemons and olives, and beautiful villas are springing up around, where English comforts are superadded to the luxuries of the Italian landscape. In 1847 Mentone openly threw off its allegiance, and the story is for all the world—so do things come over and over again—like some narrative in Thucydides of a revolving city. It made itself a free town under the protectorate of Sardinia, and Sardinia, which proverbially looked upon Italy as an artichoke to be swallowed leaf by leaf, was fast engulfing this particular leaf. But then came the cession of Nice and Savoy, in which Mentone and Roccabruna were virtually made over to France, and their disloyalty has forfeited their nationality, and now Monaco is becoming more prosperous than she has ever been. It will soon be the most famous little nook of Europe. Remarkable for its matchless climate and situation, remarkable for its ancient and romantic history, it is adding to all this that factitious renown which belongs to Hamburg or Baden-Baden. As part and parcel of the public law of Europe, Monaco is an independent, and sovereign or semi-sovereign state. The ancient flag is still floating on the ancient fortress, a shield *en échiquier* supported by two monks. The name of the place is assigned to the word 'Monachus;' but though a legend is

cited in support of this, such a derivation is most insecure.

The name of the place is, as a matter of fact, much more ancient, and the history of the place goes far back into a dim antiquity, whither, I believe, few archæologists will venture to follow. In the days when mythology was accepted as veritable, and, like Sir Roger de Coverley, worthy people derived a great deal of valuable information from the end of the Latin dictionary, it would at once be accepted as fact that the place was founded by Hercules during the course of his numerous adventures. That accomplished gentleman, the editor of Murray's red book on North Italy, says, that it is frequently mentioned in the Antonine Itinerary, and gives Lucan's accurate but somewhat pompous description of the situation of the place. It would not be difficult to cap this quotation. There are passages about it in Petronius Arbiter and Silius Italicus, not to mention also Ammianus Marcellinus. And I suppose most schoolboys recollect the Virgilian lines

' Aggeribus socer Alpina atque arce Menæci
Descendens.'

An important chapter in the history of imperial Rome is concerned with the fortunes of maritime Liguria. At Monaco there are very genuine and most unmistakeable Roman remains, which the tourist, as a rule, hardly cares very diligently to study, or even to read about. The Ligurian race still retains very much of the purity and independence of a very decided national character, but in Monaco this is very much mixed up with a Provençal element, just as at Genoa it is very much mixed up with a Lombard element. In the tenth century a gallant chief took an active part in the expulsion of the Saracens from this region and from Provence. In consequence of this the dominion of Monaco was granted to him by the Emperor Otho. In the middle ages we find Carlo Grimaldi the sovereign of a dominion which escaped the lot of becoming a fief of the empire. For nearly eight centuries the princes of the Grimaldi line reigned over their little terri-

tory. At the commencement of the eighteenth century the male line of the Grimaldis became extinct. It was said that a rightful heir was to be found in the ancient and noble house of Grimaldi at Genoa, and other claimants have been spoken of in other quarters. The daughter of the last prince, Antonio Grimaldi, had married into the French family of Thorigny. The history of this transfer is highly curious. It belongs partly to the region of the scandalous memoirs, and partly to the veritable history of Louis XIV., and might be treated with that happy mixture of truth and fiction of which Scribe's *Verre d'eau* is the first and the most amusing instance that comes to mind.

We will, however, adjust our historical notions a little more accurately presently. I am just now rather anxious that my readers should seize upon the salient features of the place. The day before yesterday I received an admirable letter from an old college friend, who, having heard that I was busy with this paper, has, in writing to me, indulged in a vein of reminiscence. I must quote some of his letter. And thankfully consider, my friends, how few letters now-a-days will bear quotation. People don't read letters, they only send messages. When people had to pay a great deal for postage they liked to receive something worth the paying for; but the modern system of cheap postage is fast putting an end to the possibility of many more bulky works of 'Memoirs and Correspondence.' 'I shall not easily forget my first view of Monaco,' writes my *Fidus Achates*. 'I started from Nice by vetturino, at 7 A.M., a November day, while it was still dusk, and as we crossed the Pont Neuf, the promontory of Antibes, stretched out in the grey morning light, showed only as a black line, darker than the deep colour of the sea, while in the background we could just see the outlines of the Estrelles mountains; but as we mounted the hill on the Genoa road, and the distant mountains towards the Col di Tenda came in view, the sun lit up the snowy peaks with the most exquisitely soft hue,

and when at the Quatre Chemins, a turn in the road brought us within sight of Antibes, it all stood out sharp and clear in the still morning, while beyond the promontory was seen a black dot in the Bay of Cannes, which we recognized as the island of Les Marquerrites, where was confined that mysterious individual, the Man in the Iron Mask. Below us lay Villefranche, with its quaint little town and large natural harbour, the sea gaining in colour as the sun rose—now blue—now green—as we looked out far upon its wide expanse or cast our eyes immediately beneath the rocky cliffs; while here and there a little shallow inlet showed us, even from the height at which we stood, how marvellously clear the water was: and so on and on, passing Eza, that quaint little village, former stronghold of pirates, perched on a rock, as if to say, Come if you dare; and now scarce a hundred villagers live there, quite out of the world, staring when pic-nic parties adventure thither from Nice and Mentone, and scramble about and enjoy themselves as only English people do, in simple wonderment as to what can be found in their little village to excite such curiosity. Eza stands quite away from the high road, lying below it, and there is no passable carriage road to it. On past Eza, winding round the mountain side, the Corniche road seems hanging in the air—now on the side of a hill at the bottom of which lies the sea—and has little protection in the way of parapet; and nervous people often get alarmed as a lumbering diligence comes tearing along and driving you to the very edge, that it may pass. “Ah,” said the *conducteur* of a diligence to me as we sharply rounded a corner on this road, “Voilà mon coin. That is the only place where I ever broke down in all the twenty years that I have travelled between Nice and Genoa. Mille tonnerres, but the postilion—he drank one, two, three petit verres, and then one more and then another before we set out, he did not care where we went—and as we turned the corner we met the other diligence. Mon Dieu, it was lucky we were coming from Genoa and were on the side

next the hill! We went right into that corner, and smash went the wheel, and down we came.” “Anybody hurt?” I mildly asked. “No, not a scratch, at least not to me. Some of the people inside were cut by the glass of the windows, and were knocked about, but nobody killed.” Well, I got on to Turbia, the highest point which the road reaches—then a new view breaks upon one. In the distance is a point stretching out into the sea, at the end of which is Bordighera, city of palms. A short distance on this side of it we see the fortifications of Ventemiglia, and we begin to realise that we are approaching Italy, and then we begin to descend. Beneath the mountains on our right we see a miniature city, immediately beneath a rock—standing on a rocky promontory, to the very edge of which the little town is built, so that a morning bath might be taken by dropping over the side of the parapet which runs along the street on either side of the town. Below it a little bay forms a natural harbour, likewise in miniature. More of a city than a town it is, for there is the public square and the palace of the prince, while cannon show their muzzles from the wall, and then without the town, on the Mentone side, is that large white building which we are told is the Casino. Altogether it looks like a toy city, and from the height all seems so small that we should not have been surprised, on descending to it, to see a Lilliputian race as its inhabitants. It is a bright, sunny little place, but too much exposed to make a pleasant residence. The garden at the extremity of the town seawards is very pretty, neat gravel walks and pleasant seats, and cacti of singular form and growth. The little army of the Prince numbers I know not how many, but it must be small, and brought to mind Dumas’ story of the petty German states, in which his inquiry for the army met with the response, that the infantry was on duty, but the cavalry died yesterday; a further inquiry leading to the discovery that one of the latter and two of the former constituted a standing army of three men. After

strolling about the town, I paid a visit to the Casino, a handsome building standing in a garden and situated near the sea; an excellent band was performing operatic music—a spacious reading-room, well supplied with newspapers, was surrounded with luxurious seats, while beyond was the fatal chamber to which all this served for decoy, where two long green tables are surrounded by anxious faces, and no sound is heard in the pauses of the music but the croupier's monotonous cry.'

So far Achates. Being in a lazy mood, I am well content that he should do some of the description for me, particularly the poetical part, and I am sure he does it very nicely. Presently, however, I must supplement some additional particulars to his sketch. *Non cuivis homini contingit adire Monachum*, as, I think, one of the local writers classically remarks. You see it is a place where one may spend a great deal of money—particularly if one goes to the Casino—and hardly make any. There are a few wretched individuals who hope to make money, very 'seedy looking,' who are on-lookers at the game, and marking the play on cards, and making a system by which they hope to cheat Fortune out of her own. Monaco has long been noted for its willingness to eat and unwillingness to work. Accordingly, the Italian saying goes—

'Son Monaco, sopra un scollo
Non semina e non raccoglie
E pur mangiar voglio.'

'She is too beautiful to do anything,' explanatorily observes one of her great admirers. The appellation of the people is Monagasques; the fair sex have a very pretty and ingenious name coined for them, which is held to be literally descriptive, 'Mona-coquette.' I dare say, my well-read friends, that you will remember little notices of Monaco in your reading. Smollett has such, and so has Addison, and Madame de Sévigné and Madame de Genlis. But, after all, these are old-fashioned notions, and the altered state of things requires that they should be set right according to the modern standard.

The English, you know, have taken possession of all this seaboard. They are swallows who fly over the sea, and fix their sheltered nests in this region for the winter months that are no winter here. As it is always interesting to know the candid opinion of foreigners respecting us English, and as that opinion is often inaccurately reported, let me cite two impartial foreign opinions respecting the behaviour of the English on this coast. 'The English,' says M. Louis Roubandi, 'little expansive in general, are those who take the least part in the annual fusion of foreigners and the inhabitants of Nice. Those who in their own country receive us with so much kindness and an almost Oriental hospitality—those who command our esteem while they conciliate our affection and confidence, are no longer the same when once they place their feet on the Continent. Whether it is suspicion or national pride, all their familiarity at once ceases. It is hard for them to form a serious connection with any stranger. But one ought also to say, that when they admit you to their intimacy, it is cordial, sincere, and lasting.' 'Ils y vivent,' says the Chevalier Bertolotti of our people at Nice; 'absolument comme s'ils étaient à Brighton (i. e. Brighton). Pendant la journée ils font des promenades, à pied, à cheval, en voiture. Le soir ils se réunissent entre eux, lisent le *Galignani*, parlent politique, prennent le thé ou portent des toasts, mais le tout à leur manière, et presque toujours sans fusion de société étrangère.' Nice is at present the head-quarters—although the enormous prices have driven hundreds away lately—and from Nice they swarm 'in all the region round about.' The persevering English are constantly discovering new places in this district, and adding them to the geographical atlas. In 1855 an adventurous Englishman discovered, in the climatological sense, Mentone, the chief town of the ancient dominion of Monaco. A baronet—so runs the legend told by grateful natives—stayed here one day for a time as he travelled on with his family to Genoa. He called

for dinner. His wish received attention. He demanded beds. Attention arose to astonishment. He declared his intention of not going further, but spending some months there. Astonishment arose to the wildest excitement and amazement. 'Ont-ils de drôles d'idées, ces Anglais! Ne pas aller à Gênes, quand on est venu à change de Nice à Menton!' observed the disgusted postilion. Sir Reginald's clear eyes had distinguished the great advantages of the place. He stayed there, and wrote for friends to join him. There was soon a colony of a dozen families, and the colony has been increasing ever since. This season the English have populated Bordighiera, where the palm is found in tropic beauty and abundance. Next year a swarm will probably settle down upon San Remo. Multitudes make a momentary pause at Monaco in their flight, but scarcely any spend more than a night or two at the place. The London doctors will give the preference to any other point on the coast. Those who come will be of two very different classes of people. The first will consist of the very limited class of historical and archæological students who come to study the scenery of a very quaint and remarkable history, and the second class of those who, tired with the Eden-like simplicity, quietude, and beauty of this heaven-blessed region, seek out the solitary corner where Temptation, in its most flagrant forms, is to be encountered. There will be always those who sing with Don Cæsar de Bazan—

'Au risque être suspendu
Vive le fruit défendu.'

You have probably seen, Achates, a recent number of the 'Edinburgh Review,' in which you no doubt skimmed through an article on the Journal of the Marquis Dangeau, and the 'Memoirs of the Duc de St. Simon.' The paper will perhaps do something towards reviving a taste for the better class of French memoirs. These voluminous works—the edition of each which I have been using is in twenty volumes—give detailed accounts of the break

in the Monaco dynasty, when, by failure of male heirs, the succession devolved, through marriage, on the French Matignon family. I cannot say that I fully agree with the estimate which the reviewer has formed of the Duc de St. Simon. Without disputing the fact that St. Simon was a thorough gentleman among people who, in the best sense of the word, were very much the reverse, with a hatred of everything which was mean and abject, I think that a careful examination of some of the details might have shown the reviewer that St. Simon might be both very spiteful and very inexact. The reviewer has followed St. Simon too implicitly in his depreciation of Dangeau, and it must be remembered that St. Simon saw Dangeau with prejudiced eyes, and when Dangeau was in the decay of old age. I do not like the settled hostility and dislike with which St. Simon speaks of the Princes of Monaco and everything belonging to their land and line. 'La souveraineté d'une roche,' sneers St. Simon, 'du milieu de laquelle on peut pour ainsi dire cracher hors de ses étroites limites.' The dominion of Monaco was certainly much better than this at the time when it included Rocca-bruna and Mentone. In the same coarse vein he sneers at Lewis I. of Monaco, who, he says, was as round as a cask and had an aldermanic protuberance. The poor prince had been a gallant though young fellow in his day, and had been a rival of our Charles II. for the love of Hortense Mancini. St. Simon says that it was on the marriage of this prince—then Duc de Valentinois—to Marie de Lorraine, that the father-in-law, M. le Grand—the name under which *le grand écuyer* is always known—obtained for M. de Monaco and his children the rank of a foreign prince, 'à quoi ils n'avaient jamais osé songer jusque là.' It was this which gave them the *tabouret*, the coveted privilege of sitting down in the presence of royalty. Before this St. Simon asserts that the proper title was only Lord of Monaco. This seems to be an error. The title of Sovereign Prince had been acknowledged by Charles V. and Philip II.,

the Popes, and the Italian republics; it was continued by Louis XIV., and is acknowledged by the public law of Europe, in the treaty of Utrecht and the treaties of Vienna.

The suzerainty of Monaco had been one of the objects of contention between France and Spain during the great rivalry of the sixteenth century. In the fourteenth century the reigning Grimaldi family closely associated themselves with France. They shed their blood gallantly on its behalf on the fatal day of Crecy, an assistance which the French repaid at a memorable siege of Monaco by the fleet of Genoa. In the contention between Charles V. and Francis I. the superior diplomacy of Charles secured Monaco to himself, and on one occasion he is reported, by a flattering legend, to have declared the whole of the inhabitants elevated to the *noblesse*. The Prince of Monaco was loaded by Charles Quint with important titles and estates. The French tradition, however, continued strong. Honoré II., when quite a young man, made up his mind to renounce the Spanish alliance for the French. The Duc d'Angoulême, who then administered Provence, is supposed to have had a great deal to do in persuading the Prince to this step. In 1641, by a *coup d'état*, Honoré chased away the Spaniards. The real contriver of the whole affair was, doubtless, Cardinal Richelieu, ever eager to abuse the house of Austria. A French garrison was admitted, and the new situation of things confirmed by treaty. All the domains of the Grimaldi family in Lombardy and Naples were, of course, confiscated by their estranged friends. Louis XIII. amply indemnified him for all these losses. He made him baron, count, seigneur, marquis; erected the dukedom of Valentinois in his favour, and his title from Monaco ran 'Highness, by the grace of God.' Following the precedent of Richelieu, the Regent Anne of Austria and Mazarin gave Honoré some important privileges, and loaded him with honours when he visited the French court. He had an only son, who was killed by the accidental discharge of a gun. Be-

fore his death he had married and left a heir, Louis. The child had been baptized with circumstances of extraordinary splendour; the young king of France, after whom he was named, and Anne of Austria, being the god-parents. Honoré II. concentrated all his affections on his grandson, and in his will besought him never to waver in his loyalty to France. The historians of the principality draw a parallel between this prince and Louis XIV. This reminds us of what the concierge of the palace of Monaco told Addison, that though all Europe had been in flames, the king of France and the prince, his master, had always maintained a good understanding.

Louis, two years before he came to his principedom, married, in 1660, Charlotte Catherine de Gramont. The lady had unfortunately been too much mixed up with the intrigues of the court of France, and is said to have solaced the king in the interregnum that prevailed between La Vallière and de Montespan. This is the prince who, even more than his successor, is the object of St. Simon's persistent dislike and misrepresentation. St. Simon makes no mention of the considerable claims which this prince possesses to the character of an enlightened jurist. The marriages of his son and daughter are duly commented on by Dangeau and St. Simon. The daughter, who was thirty-four or thirty-five, and looked it, married the Duc d'Uzes, a lad of eighteen, and died a few years afterwards. The son married Marie de Lorraine. There is a great deal of ugly scandal in the family annals about this time, and perhaps we had better quickly pass it by. When the enormous mass of the inedited papers of St. Simon are published they will perhaps throw further and more favourable light upon the different matters. Louis was a great stickler for his rights and privileges, but there hardly appears a foundation for the common statement that he died of chagrin, because his Monaco dignities were not fully conceded. He always caused it to be distinctly understood that anything he did as

peer of France was not to invalidate anything he might do as prince of Monaco. When Le Grand Monarque offered him the order of the Saint Esprit he inquired whether he should take it as duke or prince. Indeed, the court appears to have been torn with jealousy and faction concerning the amphibious character of the celebrated courtier. The prince accepted the appointment of French ambassador to Rome. But the questions of etiquette which M. de Monaco raised—he would never forget the prince in the ambassador—made himself and all around him miserable. He demanded that he should be called Monseigneur in all letters addressed to him from his government. Louis XIV. decided the point against him. The independent princes of Germany did not receive the title of Monseigneur, and this would rule the case. His public entry into Rome was marked with excessive luxury and prodigality. He assumed airs of superiority for his private rank. He demanded that the other ambassadors should style him ‘Highness,’ and to those who refused this he also refused the title of ‘Excellency.’ He omitted the customary profession of courtesy at the conclusion of his letters. He contrived to make a retreat from Rome under circumstances of great grandeur and dignity. The creditors of this worthless Prince Vaini had papal sbirri in pursuit of him even into the palace where the prince of Monaco was. The prince pointed out that as he was there it was the palace of an ambassador, and they must retire. As this was not done at once the gentlemen of his suite drew their swords and repulsed them. Hereupon some of the sbirri fired, and several of the prince’s company were wounded. The affair made a great noise at Rome. The prince, thinking the papal government slow in offering satisfaction, with great *éclat* withdrew from Rome. The sacred college was obliged to write a letter of apology to the king of France. They were avenged. The prince died in consequence of attending an audience of the pope, when he was

not in a fit state of health to leave his house.

In his successor, Antoine, the direct line of the Grimaldi family threatened to become extinct. It was this prince who constructed the fortifications at the expense of France, and he was largely concerned in the last disastrous wars of the reign. But this small sovereign was fully absorbed in the fate of his line. He had daughters only, and his brother was in holy orders, and died an archbishop. He lived unhappily with his wife, who did not care for her husband, and found Monaco insupportably dull after the gaieties of Paris. The general plan was, that the eldest daughter should make some great match and her husband be placed in the succession. Father and mother quarrelled about the young lady, who was placed in a convent till matters could be arranged. The girl declined: Dangeau tells us, that she would not sign any marriage treaty which her mother had not signed first, and madame was not likely to sign anything to please monsieur. The mother was not even allowed to see her daughter, but she came to Paris, when she found, to her great mortification, that Paris had forgotten the charming Mdlle. d’Armagnac—and upset the proposed alliance with M. de Roney. Eventually, a marriage was arranged with the son of de Matignon, of a renowned and ancient house, though vilified by St. Simon, dating back earlier than the Crusades. The case was a peculiar one, and arranged in a manner so favourable to M. de Monaco, that St. Simon is quite enraged. The prince required a good deal. He had his creditors, and wanted ready money from his intended son-in-law to satisfy them. This son-in-law must be of noble birth, and yet be willing to relinquish his name, family, liveries, and arms, for those of the Grimaldi family. Then he must charge himself with a dower for the two younger sisters of his wife, and also satisfy any claim which the Abbé de Monaco might prefer. Another condition might arise; after all, it was possible that the Prince de Monaco might have

a son, and then this married daughter must lose all the great advantages she was to bring to her husband. The prince certainly drove a hard bargain for his daughter. But then he was able to offer a great deal. His son-in-law would become a sort of sovereign. Louis XIV. was willing to re-erect in his favour the vast duchy of Valentinois, which had been limited to heirs male. Directly upon the marriage, the son-in-law was to become Duc de Valentinois, and was to retain this title for his life, even if the Prince of Monaco should really have a son. Such was the annoyance which St. Simon considers monstrous, and that Louis must have been in his dotage to have permitted it. When St. Simon speaks of the Prince and Louis XIV. he does not appear to be aware of the great services which this mouse had rendered to this lion.

The marriage came off. The dreaded child did not put in an appearance. Antoine was gathered to his fathers in the course of years. And then the Matignon-Grimaldi dynasty succeeded. The first prince of the new line was the son of the heiress. He lived to see the tree of liberty planted in his little dominion, and died in Paris, 1795. A fair daughter-in-law lost her head by the guillotine in the days of Robespierre. First came a popular *emeute*, and subsequently the little territory was annexed to France. One or two of the natives attained to great distinction in the wars of the Revolution, and one of them, Baron Bosio, gained a European fame as an artist. The palace was first made an hospital for the wounded, and afterwards 'un dépôt de mendicité.' In a single instance only did Monaco directly attain any experience in the war. An English frigate made an attack on the place, having heard that it had been made a store for arms and ammunition. The English exploded a quantity of gunpowder, which unfortunately killed many women and children who had incautiously crowded to the spot.*

* For most of the facts see M. Matinier's valuable monogram, 'Monaco et ses Princes.' Two vols. 1862.

The Grimaldi family saw their little principality blotted out of the map of Europe, and, at one time, little thought that their small sovereignty, a strange remnant of the feudal system, would be revived, and, so to speak, fossilized for ages, for the inspection of the curious who would examine into the reliques of the mediæval age. Talleyrand quietly scribbled, 'et le Prince de Monaco rentrover dans ses états,' on the bottom of one of the pages of one of the treaties of Vienna. The wily diplomatist had his own good secret reasons. The sentence was allowed to stand, and perhaps was scarcely scrutinized. On his way to take possession of his dominions, the restored prince encountered at Cannes no less a person than Napoleon himself, on his way from Elba. He dexterously extricated himself from an awkward invitation to accompany the great man to Paris, and then hastened to give information to the Sardinian government of what he had just witnessed in Provence. To the great disgust of the people, an English garrison suddenly came to Monaco and occupied it. In the new order of things, Monaco was placed under the suzerainty of Sardinia. The government of Honoré V. lasted twenty-five years, and is a most complete example, on a small scale, of the effects of tyranny after the ancient Greek or mediæval Italian model. 'Lui, prince, il agissait,' says M. Abel Rendu, whose history is a most amusing contrast to the court history of M. Braine, 'envers ses malheureux gouvernés comme le lord d'Angleterre envers ses tenanciers d'islande.' It is very remarkable that this cruel and oppressive prince prided himself upon being a philanthropist. While he was doing his best to impoverish his people and make them miserable, he was forming schemes on his Norman estates for the abolition of pauperism. He also published a little work on this subject, and so he added to the Supplement to Horace Walpole's Catalogue. On his marble tomb, in one of the chapels of the church of Monaco, is the inscription, 'Ci git qui voulut faire le bien.' We are

all familiar with the phrase respecting such good intentions. He ruled his country with a rod of iron. Some of the details of his over-legislation are as ridiculous as they must have been fraught with harmfulness and irritation. The prince constituted for himself a monopoly of flour, and no bread was to be bought in his dominions that was not of Serene baking. Any sandwiches which travellers might bring with them were remorselessly seized at the custom-house. The state miller bought up the inferior grain which the police of Genoa did not allow to be sold. Any ship that brought any proscribed foreign bread to any port of the prince had its cargo confiscated. Every baker was obliged to keep a register of the quantity of bad bread sold to each family, and domiciliary visits of police were made to those families who were not thought to have bought enough. Similar monopolies prevailed with respect to other articles. The justice administered in his tribunals was of as bad quality as the loaves. There was also an 'Etat Civil des bestiaux,' and a native was obliged to make a formal registration of the birth of every animal, with a declaration of its sex, and also to give in a regular certificate of such death. We believe that this is a unique absurdity in the annals of civic tyranny. The retribution for all this misgovernment, as is generally the case, fell on his successor and brother, Florestan. When the present Pope inaugurated a new era of revolution, the principality of Monaco caught the flame. A constitutional government was demanded, and conceded. Soon the tyranny of the mob made itself felt in acts of violence and revolt. The prince brought complaints against his subjects to the Tuileries. Louis Philippe felt that the prince was hardly treated, and M. Guizot was in favour of giving him material assistance. But in a few months came the revolution of February, and Guizot and his master were powerless.

It became an open question whether Mentone and Roquebrune should be free cities under the Sar-

dinian protectorate, or be in totality annexed to Sardinia. Prince Florestan died in 1856, and was succeeded by the present prince, who took the title of Charles III. In the Conference held at Paris preceding the treaty of that year, the Austrian plenipotentiary adroitly urged, that the occupation of the Monaco territory of Mentone and Roccabruna by Sardinian troops rested on exactly the same ground as the occupation of Rome by French troops. In 1859 the people of Mentone got up a manifestation, and attempted to revolutionize Monaco, which, under all alternations, had clung faithfully to its hereditary lord. That attack was repulsed, and the same year was definitely to adjust the prolonged era of civic troubles. When Nice was ceded to Savoy, Mentone and Roquebrune would be geographically implied by such a cession, and politically also, inasmuch as they had virtually become Sardinian. The political right might not be perfectly clear as a matter of public law, but the Emperor of the French had a show of right sufficient for his purpose, and it would have been impossible to argue with the master of three hundred legions. I think that the transaction which ensued, which has been somewhat obscure for most English readers of politics, reflects the highest credit upon the Emperor Napoleon, and on the national morality. Prince Charles of Monaco possessed a claim on his two revolted towns. But it was a claim which, practically, he would find it impossible to enforce. But, whatever it might be, it was decided that the claim should be considered and satisfied. A minister plenipotentiary was nominated on the part of the Emperor, and a minister plenipotentiary on the part of the Prince of Monaco. There is something of moral sublimity in the fact: this mighty emperor and this petty prince, this nation of forty millions and this little population of twelve thousand, meeting on terms of perfect equity and equality. An indemnity of four millions of francs was paid to the prince, in pursuance of the treaty of Roquebrune, and other articles were signed, of

highly honourable and considerate character, in reference to Monaco. This transaction has sometimes been ignorantly misrepresented, and the gloss cast upon it that the Prince of Monaco sold his territory to the Emperor. But the prince could not have helped himself. For years he had been without the slightest hold upon these towns, and the indemnity paid him by the Emperor was, in reality, an act of refined equity and kindness such as we very rarely meet with in the history of territorial transactions. Prince Charles III., although the treaties of Vienna 'ont cesse d'exister,' still continues, by virtue of those treaties, an independent prince, and, on paper at least, is a very great man indeed. I have just been looking over the list of his ministry; it is considerably larger than most lists of the English government, and occupies three printed pages; but then in England we do not take such formal count of the postman and the policeman.

I do not know how far the season 1863-64 may have succeeded with M. Blanc—only moderately well, I believe; and for my own part I should not mind if the man were well-nigh ruined. Still his boat and his omnibus were tolerably full, and when the railroad is accomplished, which is to run along the beach and join Nice to Genoa, M. François Blanc may really have built for himself a golden bridge when he is obliged to evacuate Homburg. It is observable that people play at roulette when comparatively small sums are staked, and not much is done at trente et quarante, or, to give the more usual name, rouge et noir, when the extravagance of the stakes is often something frightful. The last is played by cards alone; there is no longer wheel or ball; and the croupier's solitary cry is 'Rouge gagne, couleur page,' or the converse. Rouge et noir requires some skill, and is not the pure hazard of roulette. It is amusing to watch the air of superiority assumed by the croupiers of the former games. They are 'gentlemen,' and the others are only 'men' and 'fellows.' The reason is, that their salary is nearly

double, and they only receive their promotion to the more difficult game after years of probation at roulette. Now, the roulette table, in addition to its thirty-six numbers, has two zeros. At Homburg, M. Blanc only reserves one of the zeros to himself, but at Monaco he takes them both. The zero is the main source of profit to the bank, and it is really very wonderful how the ball, instead of dropping into any one of the thirty-six numbers, contrives to select the red or black zero. Visitors to Monaco, according to their tastes, when the omnibus has brought them gratis to the Plateau, select either the *salon de lecture* or the *salon de jeu*. Those who take the latter, though they may play for little, lose that little, and generally scramble back to Nice in a very dilapidated condition. The hotel is a very good one, and you may get a handsome dinner for a handsome price. A great many curious and very private histories belong to those who frequent this establishment of M. Blanc's—to the young gentlemen and ladies, who, not content with the Eden-like pleasures of wandering in groves of palm and myrtle beneath the most radiant of skies and the bluest of waters, have nice little dinners with plenty of champagne, and spend all their spare time in the interior of the Casino.

Some of them, perhaps, are as much M. Blanc's servants as the man in black or the men in blue and red. Are my friends aware of the institution of the *Racoleur* and the *Racoleuse*? These are very charming people, nice-mannered and nicely dressed, with considerable personal attractions and a pleasing vein of anecdotes, who have sold themselves, body and soul, to the interests of such establishments as this, and who will ruin the bodies and souls of many others. These are often people of high estate and high education, who have lapsed therefrom, and now draw a dishonourable subsistence from that gambling system by which they were originally destroyed. They often show an amount of polished ability which would do credit to a diplomatist, and of arduous exertion

which might belong to a Christian missionary. In homely English phraseology, these are simply decoy-ducks. They may be found not alone at the gambling places, but at various great towns which may be brought into contact with Monaco. These persons represent, I imagine, a considerable amount of secret-service money to be added to the palpable expenditure on directors, inspectors, croupiers, police, clerks, servants, advertising, gardening, buildings, with their long indefinite et cetera. Sometimes there is absolutely a mendicancy department, where those who can prove that they have lost all their money to the establishment are sent home, rather than discredit the institution by their poverty-stricken appearance. I do not know whether this is already the case with Monaco; but, doubtless, with the expansion of its capabilities all the usual machinery will be developed. That very gentlemanly man whom you meet at the table d'hôte, who does not play himself, but who can tell you wonderful things about the immense sums won with comparatively small stakes at roulette, he probably belongs to the *personnel* of the bank, and is nothing better than a *racoleur*. As for the unhappy *racoleuse*—well, perhaps the less we say about her the better. It is very odd, that since the new system Monaco has become the head-quarters both of a great number of Jesuits and a great number of lorettes. Perhaps it is hoped that they will neutralize each other. But, Achates, let us eschew this raffish lot, and take Monaco for what it is worth in itself, regretting that one of the most ancient families of Europe has been sullied by such an alliance. The Serpent has hardly ever crept into so fair an Eden. Did you ever see such quantities of oranges and lemons, raised terrace above terrace, with gardens also of figs, violets, and olives of so dense a shadow? You may often buy oranges at the wholesale price of ten a penny. This mountain road scaling Turbia, the downward seaward crags, the quaint old city crowning the rock that rises sheer from the sea, the wild tropic growth

clambering around masonry and crag, the enormous palace and ancient barracks, the Alpine background, that sea in the front; here is a picture better than that other—the marble, and gilding, and parquette floor, and the table over which the oil lamps will be kindled presently.

Near Monaco is the old château of Carnolàs, which is now regarded as the commencement of Mentone, which the celebrated Antoine I. built and Honoré V. partly demolished. The premier étage is still palatial. Many portraits are here seen, and among them those of Antoine and his wife of the Lorraine-Armagnac family. There are many other portraits of the princes, down to the time of Charles X.; among these is the portrait of the beautiful Italian girl who was so charmed with her future husband, Honoré III., that she declared she would either marry him or take the veil: 'o Monaco, o monaca' is the clever witticism attributed to her. Sad to say, she ran away from her enchanting man, and finished by marrying, at the age of sixty, in England, the Prince of Condé, whom she followed to our shores in the immigration. Her first husband did gallant service in the battle of Fontenay, where his younger brother, only eighteen, lost a limb. Voltaire alludes to this in his poem on Fontenay—

'Monaco perd son sang et l'amour en soupir.'

Bravery had been hereditary in this family. One of the Honorés furnished three galleys to Don John of Austria, and fought bravely at Lepanto. It is said, however, that the people of Monaco, rejoicing in their little port, have been Barbary corsairs on their own account; we suppose in those primitive times when neither those who committed piracy nor those who asked questions about it saw any harm in the matter.

Coming within sight of Monaco, we admire its splendid ramparts, and so, descending a wide slope, we come to the guarded New Gate. Here is a beautiful terraced walk, where one admires the great height

to which the aloe-tree attains. You may listen to the music of the gambling *cercle de Monaco*. In some places the road, taken by the round, shows the remains of walls more ancient than the fortifications. The parish church of St. Nicholas has a chapel devoted to the remains of the princes of Monaco. Their names are simply indicated on the stones of white marble. There is a second open gate, and a third defended by an ancient *machiolated* wall, which opens on the *place d'armes*. From this esplanade there is a magnificent view, and the château, rooted to the rock, appears as imperishable as its foundation. There is something Moresque and oriental about castle, donjon, towers, galleries, and arcades. Over the principal entrance are the sculptured arms with the motto '*Deo juvante*.' Guelphs and Ghibelines have contended for this castle. Dark stories are told of the events that happened at this castle—legends of horror and veritable history. Sometimes it resounded with the voices of joy and festivity; oftener it was the scene of saddest tragedy. One of the princes was assassinated at the very moment when Louis XII. had confirmed all the honours which Charles VIII. had bestowed. Here his successor was slain, through the infamous treason of his own nephew, a full sad story, which the romancist or tragedian might delight in. Here the renowned Augustin Grimaldi was poisoned. Here Charles V. made a magnificent entry, and for three days there was a continuous fête. Here Pope Julius III. made a memorable visit. Here, too, the poet Petrarch was arrested, just as he was on the point of embarking for Naples. The gardens of the château are highly curious, of large extent, and very well kept. In one part of the palace is the room, '*chambre d'Yorck*,' where the young Duke of York died in 1767. The room is very interesting in its decoration. This part of the palace has recently been repaired. They carefully keep among the archives of the palace the letter which George III. wrote to the prince. There is scarcely a possibility that my readers have

seen this letter, and so I transcribe it:—

'MON COUSIN,

'En m'apprenant la triste nouvelle de la mort de mon très cher frère le Duc d'York, on ne m'a pas laissé ignorer en même tems vos soins assidus pour luy procurer tout ce que pouvoit contribuer à son rétablissement on à son soulagement, l'attachement que vous avez manqué pour celuy qui me touchoit de si près m'a pénétré des sentimens les plus vifs d'estème et de reconnaissance pour vous.

'Je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait en sa sainte garde et vous accorde toutes sortes de félicités. Je suis bien véritablement, mon cousin,

'Votre bon cousin,

'GEORGE R.'

Nor was this friendly letter all. The local chroniclers delight to relate that when the Prince of Monaco went to England, he was loaded with attentions and kindnesses from the King of Great Britain. King George sent the prince a present of valuable horses which belonged to his late brother, and the Duke of York followed his example in doing the same thing. A letter is preserved in the archives of Monaco, giving an account of the honours paid the prince when he visited the royal dockyards, and the little principality appears to have been highly flattered by the attentions paid to her chief by powerful England.

If one is fond of ancient legend and of curious customs, a great deal may be done in this way at Monaco. On some of the old coins of the place you may find the legend, *Sancta Devota tu nos ab hoste protege*. Her oratory is still pointed out. The legend connects her memory with the first establishment of Christianity in this region. She had been slain in the Diocletian persecution, but her friends placed her body on board a boat for Africa, where her remains might rest quietly. But a south wind blew strongly, and impelled from Africa to the northern coast of the Great Sea. In a dream the pilot saw a dove fly from the martyr's mouth towards a distant valley

on the eastern side of the promontory of Hercules. Taking this as a divine guidance, they hither bore the body, and later the faithful came and built an oratory on her tomb. But the fame of St. Devota is rivalled by that of Our Lady of Laghet. A pious lady of Monaco, Camilla Porta, found that even S. Devota could not heal her of an affliction. There was a little chapel dedicated to the Virgin at Laghet, screened by rocks and almost fallen into ruin. Camilla Porta repaired there, was healed, and in gratitude restored the chapel. Subsequently a church and convent arose on the spot. At the present day, on Trinity Sunday and other times, it is the crowded resort of multitudinous pilgrims far and near. One day a careworn wanderer presented himself. He offered his prayers, he made his confession, and resting under the roof of the simple monks for one night, on the next day he continued his travels. It was Charles Albert, after the unfortunate battle of Novara, flying into exile, and here resting one last night in his forfeited dominions before he proceeded to close his career in Portugal. An inscription on a stone of the convent records the fact. It is remarkable that three centuries before, Francis I., after the disastrous field of Pavia, in like manner took an opportunity for prayer and self-humiliation at the neighbouring Charteuse. But nothing more remarkable can be cited than the custom preserved at Monaco on Good Friday. It is a genuine remnant of the old Morality Plays, and very closely approximates in interest to the Ammergau Mystery. The Passion is celebrated, and it is said that the impression is heightened by a resemblance which the narrow streets of Monaco bear to those of Jerusalem. The general impression conveyed to a religious mind is painful, and various of the details cannot but seem blasphemous. Many Roman Catholics think this, and the Bishop of Nice has in vain sought to put down these representations. They have existed at Monaco from time immemorial, and it ought to be said that in the simple

minds and vivid feelings of this excitable southern race, there is nothing wrong or ridiculous in them, and any person who manifested any outward signs of mere amazement, would incur a risk of rough treatment. Vast crowds are assembled from all the surrounding country. Besides the Passion, there are other representations, I am informed. I have an account of those which took place this year. Adam and Eve were represented. Eve was a young girl got up in muslin, and with a quantity of crinoline which was hardly primeval. She carried an apple, from which she occasionally offered fruit to Adam, a youth in flesh-coloured tights. The effect of a conflux of strangers to Monaco must inevitably wear off any simplicity or genuine feeling that hitherto may have been attached to these representations, and will, it is to be hoped, ultimately result in their abolition.

It is this conflux of strangers which has made the last phase in the history of Monaco. The Prince has devoted himself to 'the development of the internal resources of the place.' The meaning and application of this phrase may be understood from what has been said. Monaco has, in its time, been an excessively dull place, and the maidens of the place have made terrible complaints on this score. But now the streets, formerly so *triste* and solitary, are beginning to be crowded with gay promenaders, and palatial hotels are arising, and the clash of music resounding in gay gardens and pavilions, and the face of the landscape is being changed as if by an enchanter's wand. Very soon Monaco, instead of being the forgotten capital of an obscure and almost extinct principality, chiefly of interest to the historian and antiquary, will be one of the most fashionable of European watering-places. It is all very well to urge the beauty of the scenery and the excellence of the climate for invalids, although I believe some exception might be taken to the second of these items. The sea-bathing may be very excellent, and the great establishment of baths.

The plan of a *Trinkhalle*, where the mineral waters of all countries may be procured, may also have its advantages. But the great feature of the place is unquestionably this, that Monaco is to become the refuge of those vast gambling establishments which improved public opinion is now sweeping out of Germany. The magnificent hotels, the spacious reading-rooms, the walks and the music, are all accessory to this. There has always been a certain amount of gambling at the place, for it has always been a gambling town, and gambling being interdicted at Nice, many Nice people have been in the habit of resorting here for their illegal amusement. The notorious M. Blanc of Homburg has taken the Casino in hand, and under his experienced hands it has prospered. It is also said that the still more notorious M. Benazet, of Baden-Baden, who has received notice to quit his present quarters, is, moreover, about to establish himself here. But Blanc's people say, as might be expected, that this is not at all rare, and that M. Benazet wishes to obtain, or has obtained, an extension of his lease at Baden-Baden for some years more. It is devoutly believed that Monaco will be the happiest corner of the globe. 'Dans quelques années,' says one of the writers, 'tout le pays sera couvert de villas, d'hôtels, de chalets, de maisonnettes. . . . L'âge d'or fleurira alors à Monaco.' Here is the strophe of a song:—

'A la Monaco, depuis que sont faites
Les constructions du grand Casino
Hôtels et villas, blanches maisonnettes
Tout, comme l'on dit, va sur des roulettes
A la Monaco.'

I hope I have succeeded in interesting my readers in this ancient city, to which so unique an interest belongs. Its history, as I have indicated, naturally divides itself into three sections. The first of these, on which I have touched very lightly

—*spatiis inclusus iniquis*—is the most distinctive, where the princes of the Grimaldi family kept their feudal state, and carried on war and foray in the old twilight times. Next succeeds the period when Monaco passed under the protectorate severally of Spain, France, and Sardinia, when it became the historical law that there should be a confluence of smaller states to the larger, and the local history is lost in the more general history. Lastly, the place has become metamorphosed into a fashionable watering-place, and will gradually lose its distinction, although it will probably remain for ages the most perfect specimen extant, better than any which the petty courts of Germany can furnish, of a perished order of things. I am not pleased with the transformation. I confess I am sorry for the little place. The French writers, with their singular power of hiding ugly facts with rhetorical flourishes, speak of the quickened march of civilization, and the fresh current of ideas hereby introduced. I must repeat my expression of regret. There is something that I like very much in the character of the simple old Ligurian populace. Are they to be contaminated with metropolitan vices, vitiated by this new familiarity with hazard and passion? And the poor invalids, with whose pretty villas the country is everywhere studded, whose health requires a quiet home, and still more a quiet mind, will this powerful temptation withdraw them from their repose? I trust not, but I fear. It is not without foreboding and regret that I turn away from this lovely spot, the nearest earthly resemblance to a vanished Eden, the best actual embodiment of a poetical El Dorado; an Eden in beauty but not in innocence, and an El Dorado whose golden stream will henceforth flow through a polluted channel.

F. A.



THE PARTING.

JULIET. Be but sworn, my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

* * * * *

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.
Thou art *thyself* though,—not a *Montague*.

Romeo and Juliet, Act II., Sc. 2.

FROM out her father's hall she came,
Where words of party strife ran high ;
But party zeal and party fame
Were naught to her—her love was nigh !
Through mazy paths of woodland fair,
Illumed by evening's ruby glow,
She sped. She met her lover there—
Her heart's one love—her father's foe !

Tight clasped within his arms she stood,
She nestled closer to his side ;
She deemed him only grand and good—
Her joy, her triumph, and her pride !
Her lover gazed upon her face,
He thought no more of king or state ;
Love healed the ancient feuds of race—
He half forgot her father's hate !

'And wilt thou trust me, darling? Say!—
When envy's shafts my name assail—
When fortune's frown obscures my day—
When foes wax bitter—friendships fail!—
Wilt thou be true, my life's one light?
If good I do, 'tis done through thee !
My star of hope, in blackest night,
Through tempest clouds, shine out on me !

'Nay, fear not, sweet! thy guardian love
Shall keep me safe 'mid death and strife—
As gentle spirit from above
Shall charm with holy spell my life !
In thee, e'en yet, in thee alone,
My toils shall end, my labours cease !
In thee, when all the strife is done,
Shall be my heaven-sent, long-sought peace !

'My comrades call——' 'Oh, stay!' she cried,
'Ah! true, mine own, if truth can be,
I'd cling for ever to thy side—
For ever thus be near to thee !
Though kith and kin should curse thy cause,
I'd still be true, whate'er befall ;
Love's empire knows no father's laws—
The monarch love is lord of all !'

T. H. S. E.

THE HOUSE OF OVEREND, GURNEY, AND COMPANY; ITS FOUNDERS AND ITS FALL.

THE Gurneys hold a place almost unique in commercial biography. Nearly all the great merchants of the world have been men who have risen from the crowd by their own enterprise, and, beginning in small ways, have made for themselves names and reputations as successful traders and men of wealth and influence; and their sons or grandsons have generally abandoned the commerce that has helped them to distinction, eager to mix with those of rank and title older than their own, and willing, if they can, to forget by what means they have been enabled to enter the circle of aristocracy. A goodly number of the titled families of England owe their origin to old merchants and shopkeepers; but their modern representatives have nothing to do with trade, and look upon it as a thing altogether beneath them. In the Gurneys, on the other hand, we see the almost solitary instance of an ancient family that, in later times, has not been ashamed to engage in commerce, and has drawn from it a dignity as great as any that could come from lengthy pedigrees and the traditions of bygone ages.

They are descended from a Hugh de Gournay, Lord of Gournay and the adjacent Barony of Le Brai, who in 1054 commanded at the Battle of Mortimer, and in 1066 accompanied William the Conqueror to England. To him and his successors were made large grants of land in Norfolk, Suffolk, and elsewhere; and the Gournays were men of mark during the ensuing centuries. One of his descendants was Edmund Gournay, Recorder of Norwich, in the reign of Edward III.; and from that time to this Norwich has always been the residence of some members of the family. The most notable of his successors, as far as we are concerned, was a Francis Gournay, or Gurnay, who was born about the year 1560. He seems to have been a native of Norwich, and he married the daughter of a Norwich mer-

chant; but the greater part of his life was spent in London. In 1606 he was made a member of the Guild of Merchant Tailors, and for some years he lived in Broad Street ward, in the parish of Saint Mary Benet-finch, working as a merchant.

There was another merchant of his name, and a much more famous man, living in London at the same time, though apparently not of the same family. Sir Richard Gurney was born at Croydon in 1577. He was apprenticed to Mr. Richard Coleby, a silkman in Cheapside, who so liked him that, at his death, he bequeathed to him his shop and a sum of 6000*l*. Part of that money he spent in travelling through France and Italy, 'where,' says his old biographer, 'he improved himself, and, by observing the trade of the respective marts as he passed, laid the foundation of his future 'traffic.' Soon after his return, it is added, being himself of no great family, he discreetly married 'into a family at that time commanding most of the money, and, by that, most of the nobility, gentry, and great tradesmen of England.' Thereby he became a great merchant and a very wealthy man. He was Sheriff of London in 1634, and Lord Mayor in 1641. He was a great benefactor to the Clothworkers' Company, of which he was a member and warden, and he gave freely to all sorts of City charities. He also, being a sturdy Royalist, lent or gave immense sums of money to King Charles I.; at one time, on his majesty's return from Scotland, spending 4000*l*. in entertaining him. He was one of the great champions of Charles's cause in the City, during the commencement of the Commonwealth struggle. In 1640, when he was sixty-three years old, it is recorded, 'one night, with thirty or forty lights and a few attendants, he rushed suddenly out of the house on thousands, with the City sword drawn, who immediately retired to their own houses and gave over their design.' This excess

of loyalty, however, caused his ruin. In 1642, he was ejected from his Mayoralty and lodged in the Tower. There, for refusing to pay the fine of 5000*l.* appointed by Parliament, he was kept a prisoner for seven years, and there he died in 1649.

His contemporary, Francis Gournay, had his share of trouble. On the 17th of June, 1622, the corporation of Lynn lent to him and two partners of his a sum of 200*l.*, for 'setting the poor to work within the town.' According to the terms of the agreement between them, the money was to be repaid in three years' time, and in the meanwhile Gournay was 'to freely provide, find, and deliver sufficient wool and other material to all those poor people dwelling within the borough who shall come to be set on work in spinning of worsted yarn.' He was also to instruct all the poor children who were sent to him in the spinning of wool; in fact, he was to do all he could to establish in the town a branch of the woollen manufacture that for some time past had formed the chief business of Norwich and its neighbourhood. Therein, however, he failed. Good churchmen attributed the failure to the circumstance that his factory was a desecrated church. A century before, it seems, the corporation of Lynn had received certain monasteries and ecclesiastical foundations during the spoliation under Henry VIII. One of these, the church of Saint James, in Lynn, according to Sir Henry Spelman, was 'perverted to be a town house for the manufacture of stuffs, laces, and tradesmen's commodities, whereby they thought greatly to enrich their corporation and themselves. Great projects and good stocks, with a contribution from some country gentlemen, were raised for this purpose—two several times, to my knowledge. But the success was that it came to nought, and all the money employed about new building and transforming the church hath only increased desolation; for so it hath stood during the whole time almost of my memory, till they lately attempted, by the undertaking of Mr. Francis Gournay and some

artisans from London, to revive the enterprise of their predecessors; but, speeding no better than they did, have now again, with loss of their money and expectation, left it to future ruin.'

Whatever was the cause of it, Francis Gournay's experiment failed. He was not able to pay back the money he had borrowed from the corporation; and he seems to have been in trouble, by reason of it, to the end of his life. His son, Francis, born in 1628, was a merchant or shopkeeper at Maldon, in Essex, and apparently a man of not much substance. But the fortunes of the house were revived by old Francis Gournay's grandson, John Gurney, or Gurney, of Norwich. He was born at Malton on the 7th of October, 1655, and, as soon as he was old enough, was apprenticed to Daniel Gilman, a cordwainer of Norwich. For a time his business energies were restrained by the bigotry of his fellow-townsmen. Some five-and-twenty years after George Fox's public preaching of the doctrines of the Society of Friends, before 1678, at any rate, John Gurney became a convert to those doctrines. He was one of the fourteen hundred and sixty Quakers imprisoned on account of their religious opinions, and for three years he lay in Norwich Gaol. After that he was released; but still considerable difficulty arose through his refusal to take the freeman's oath required before he could be allowed to practise as a merchant within the city walls. At last, however, an exception was made in his favour, and for some thirty years or more he was a famous and very thriving merchant in Norwich, living at a house in Saint Augustine's parish. He was chiefly engaged in trade with the silk and wool dealers of France and the continent. He had connections in Holland, among others, with the Hopes of Amsterdam, just then entering on their wonderful career of commercial prosperity. Like them, he added a sort of banking business to his occupations as a merchant. He was also a manufacturer. A brother of the Sir Thomas Lombe who established

the celebrated silk-mill at Derby was a Quaker, and, for a time, a fellow-prisoner of Gurney's. Gurney afterwards bought of Sir Thomas some property that he possessed in Norwich, and placed thereon a silk-mill, imitated from that set up at Derby. In these ways he soon grew rich, being much aided in his business by his wife, Elizabeth, a daughter of Sir Richard Swanton. It was said, indeed, that Elizabeth Gurney had the greater business abilities of the two, and that she was the real founder of the commercial greatness of the Norwich Gurneys.* Be that as it may, the

* This amusing letter was addressed by her to her husband, while he was up in London, in 1716:—

'Ffor John Gurney, Senr., att Theodore Ettleston's, in Crown Court, in Gracechurch Street, London.

'Norwich, y^e 17 of 3^d mo., 1716.

*'MY DEARE,—*These are to acquaint thee that I have drawn a bill on John Ettleston, to William Crowe, or order, for James Paynter. Thou told me he nor his father would want no money, but he have been with me twice for sum, but I had none for him nor nobody else. I never knew such a week of trade all the hard weather as I have known this week. I could have had some if Richard How had sent culord and the book muslin and those goods I have sent for; but when he have served all his customers, so that they have forestalled the market, then I shall have the rubbish they leave. I take it very ill that thou tye me to those people, for I am sure we are both sufferers by it. He know right well if there be anything to do, it is at this time of yeare, but I have been served so severall yeares. Branthwait have not sent me the money, nor Lilly have paid none, nor the country have sent none, nor I have taken scarce any; so I know not what they wil do att John's. What pleasure thou meet withall at London much good may it doe thee; but I am sure I am in trouble enough. I can hardly tell how to forgive Richard How, to think how he have done by me. My neibour Alice desire thee to buy her 2 hundred of gold, and 2 pound of the best coffee. Pray desire John to think to buy me sum silk gloves of the maker, as I ordered him by my letter. So with deare love to thee and my children, I conclude,

*'Thy discontented Wife at present,
'ELIZ. GURNEY.*

'My daughter Hannah have now sent for me strait. Her child is taken very ill.'

business prospered mightily, and when John Gurney died, in 1721, he left a goodly fortune and very profitable connections to his sons, John and Joseph.

These sons were partners in both the manufacturing and mercantile concerns, prosecuting both with considerable success. John Gurney, the younger, who was born on the 16th of July, 1688, and died on the 23rd of January, 1740, was a famous man in his day. He was an intimate friend of both the Walpoles, and by them urged to enter Parliament; but he preferred to devote himself to his business, and take all his relaxation at home. In 1720 he was examined before the House of Lords concerning the intended prohibition of Indian calicoes, which had lately come to be freely imported into England. He drew a dismal picture of the evils consequent to the woollen trade from this innovation. Worcester and Gloucester, Bristol and York, he said, were being 'ruined through the preference that was being shown to cotton over woollen clothing. In York, 'the poverty of the manufacturers was so great that they were obliged to eat unwholesome diet, which had occasioned a distemper among them.' In Norwich, he represented, there was the greatest distress of all. Thousands of workpeople were thrown out of employment; and the paupers were so numerous, that on many of the houses twenty-four shillings were assessed for every pound of rent for poor-rates. These arguments, and the arguments of other monopolists prevailed. A law was made in 1721 'to preserve and encourage the woollen and silk manufactures,' whereby all cotton clothing was forbidden, with a fine of 5*l.* for each offence upon the wearer, and 20*l.* on the seller; and John Gurney was henceforth known as 'the famous advocate of the weavers.'

Joseph Gurney, four years younger than his brother, survived him by ten years, inheriting the entire manufacturing business, and leaving most of the mercantile work to be conducted by his nephews. In 1747 he was rich enough to buy the Old

Hall at Keswick, which, with subsequent additions and improvements, was made a splendid possession for his descendants. His two elder sons, John and Samuel, succeeded him as manufacturers. They introduced into Norwich the Irish plan of making home-spun yarns, besides employing great numbers of native Irish, and were in their time accounted great benefactors both to the eastern counties of England and to the northern districts of England. Samuel Gurney left only a daughter, and Richard's three sons soon retired from the manufacturing business; Richard and Joseph to settle down as country gentlemen; John, after some prosperous work as a woolstapler and spinner of worsted yarn, to become a partner with his cousin, Bartlett Gurney, in the management of the Norwich Bank. This Bank had been founded by John and Henry Gurney, sons of the John Gurney who had defended the woollen monopoly before the House of Lords in 1720. Succeeding their father as merchants, they followed the example of many other wealthy traders, and added an irregular banking business to their ordinary trade. Finding this a great source of further wealth, they at last devoted themselves exclusively to banking, and to that end converted the old house in Saint Augustine's parish into the original Norwich Bank, in 1770. From them the business descended in 1779 to Bartlett Gurney, Henry Gurney's son, and by him it was transferred to its present quarters, and enlarged by the admission of other partners, the principal being the younger John Gurney already named, and he, after Bartlett Gurney's death in 1803, was its chief proprietor and manager.

Himself a good and useful man, he was the father of a famous family. One of his daughters was Elizabeth Fry, another married Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, and a third was Priscilla Gurney. His two most notable sons were Joseph John Gurney the philanthropist, and Samuel Gurney the millionaire.

Samuel, the one whose history most concerns us, was born at Norwich on the 18th of October, 1786.

He was John Gurney's second son and ninth child. At the age of seven he was put to school with the celebrated Doctor Parr, and at fourteen he was apprenticed to the Clothworkers' Company in London, and placed in the counting-house, in Saint Mildred's Court, Poultry, in which his brother-in-law, Joseph Fry, as partner in the firm of Frys and Chapman, carried on an extensive trade as a tea-merchant, with some irregular employment as a banker. 'He took to business and liked it,' according to the report of the niece, whose first remembrances of him were as an inmate in the Saint Mildred's Court household. 'In the counting-house as well as in domestic life, he was extremely amiable and cheerful, and was beloved by the whole establishment. Although not brought up in conformity to the costume or speech of the Society of Friends, he showed no propensity to follow fashions or gaiety of appearance, beyond a suitable neatness of attire.' From the very first, indeed, he seems to have been so thoroughly a man, or rather a boy, of business, as to have cared for no lighter occupations. In 1807, when his sister Hannah married Thomas Fowell Buxton, he went down to the wedding, but, it is recorded, tired of the festivities long before they were over, and was glad to get back to his book-keeping and money-changing.

In the following year, however, Samuel Gurney was married himself, his wife being Elizabeth, the daughter of James Sheppard of Ham House, in Essex, a handsome residence that soon descended to the young couple and was their place of abode during nearly the whole of their married life. The wealth that came to Samuel Gurney from his father-in-law, as well as that bequeathed to him by his father, who died in 1809, helped him to make rapid progress in the new business in which he had embarked a little while before, on his reaching the age of twenty-one.

The business had begun a few years earlier than that, growing out of a yet earlier connection between Joseph Smith, a wool factor in Lon-

don, and the Norwich Bank. Joseph Smith had found the advantage of applying part of his savings as a merchant to the then very slightly developed trade of bill-discounting, and John Gurney of Norwich, with whom he had been acquainted long before, when both were simply dealers in raw wool and manufactured cloths, also found the advantage of sending up to him some of the surplus money of the Norwich Bank, for investment in the same way, paying to Smith a quarter per cent. on the money laid out in each transaction as his commission. This arrangement having continued for

some time, it occurred to Smith's confidential clerk, John Overend, by whom most of the bill business had been done, that there was room in London for a separate establishment devoted to trade in bills. He asked his master to open an establishment of that sort, taking him as managing partner therein. This Joseph Smith refused to do, and Overend resigned his 'clerkship in consequence. He found the Norwich Gurneys, however, more favourable to his project, and about the year 1800 the house of Richardson, Overend, and Company was founded, the chief management being in his hands, and for a

JOHN GURNEY (THE SECOND) OF NORWICH.

few years in those of Thomas Richardson, formerly chief clerk in the bank of Smith, Wright, and Gray, afterwards Eadaile and Company. Simon Martin, an old clerk, and afterwards a partner in the Norwich Bank, went up to London to help build up the business and to watch its movements on behalf of the Bank, whence most of the money was obtained for investment. The enterprise thrived wonderfully from the first, one great source of its popularity being the change introduced by the new firm, which charged the quarter per cent. commission against the borrowers of the money,

instead of the lenders as heretofore ; and in 1807 John Gurney added vastly to its strength by introducing his son Samuel as a partner. About that time Thomas Richardson retired from the business, and it was carried on under the name of Overend and Company, even after John Overend's death, until the secret of its connection with the Norwich house could no longer be kept, and it assumed its world-famous title of Overend, Gurney, and Company.

Its prosperity was in some measure the cause, but in much greater measure the consequence, of the new views on banking and trade in

money that came into force in the early part of the nineteenth century. Banking, which had existed in some other countries for a long time before, came into fashion in England about the middle of the seventeenth century, soon to lead to the foundation of the Bank of England, at William Paterson's suggestion, in 1694. It immediately proved very helpful to British commerce in lowering the rate of interest for borrowed money, strengthening all sorts of financial operations, and in other ways giving encouragement to all the branches of trade and industry. The Bank of England, however, was from the first, and is to this day, only a private bank on a large scale, endowed with special privileges on account of its loans to the government, amounting at its foundation to 1,200,000*l.*, and now to upwards of 11,000,000*l.* Its first charter offered no obstacle to the establishment of other like institutions, and no law could ever be passed preventing private individuals from following the banker's trade. But in 1709 the governors of the Bank obtained an Act forbidding the formation of any banks of issue under more than six proprietors, and so secured for themselves a practical monopoly in joint-stock banking. Their company was allowed to issue paper money to the extent of its loans to the state, but no paper money not covered by government securities was allowed, and the quantity issued could not be forced on people against their will. During the eighteenth century a great number of other banks were formed, both in London and in the country. In 1750, there were in England hardly a dozen bankers out of London; in 1793 there were more than four hundred. Scotland also, untouched by the law in favour of the Bank of England, had three joint-stock banks, with branches in various parts, besides a great number of private establishments. These banks, growing out of the commercial prosperity of the country, helped the tide of speculation which, if it might have been fortunate in times of peace, led to terrible failures on the revival of a European war and

the disasters consequent thereupon. In 1784 there were in circulation six millions of bank-notes, that is, of the paper vouchers given by bankers for the money deposited with them, which in those days took the place for ordinary trading purposes of the modern cheques. In 1792 the number had risen to nearly eleven millions and a half. Next year war was declared between England and France, and in the panic that ensued at least one-fourth of the English country banks stopped payment, most of the others being grievously shaken. The London banks also suffered considerably, the suffering being everywhere attributed in great measure to the restrictive policy of the directors of the Bank of England, who, in spite of the advice of the Government and the prayers of thousands of merchants and manufacturers, sought to strengthen their own position by issuing as little money as they possibly could for the assistance of their neighbours. For this their best excuse was in the fact that their resources had been, and continued to be yet more and more, materially crippled by the immense drains made upon them by Government on account of the expenses of its continental wars. In October, 1795, the directors, brought almost to bankruptcy, informed Pitt that they could not hold out much longer. Other messages followed, and at last, in February, 1797, the Bank was authorised by the Privy Council to refuse cash payment for its notes, or the issue of any coin in sums larger than twenty shillings. In the following May an Act was passed enforcing that resolution, and sanctioning an almost unlimited issue of notes. Sheridan declared it 'a farce to call that a bank whose promise to pay on demand was paid by another promise to pay at some undefined period,' and Sir William Pulteney introduced a bill 'for the erection of a new bank in case the Bank of England did not pay in specie on or before the 24th of June, 1798.' But this opposition was ineffectual, and the Bank Restriction Act remained in force for two-and-twenty years, without any serious

attempt at overturning the monopoly of the Bank of England.

Great advantage sprang from this Restriction Act through its encouragement of sound and enlightened views as to the value of paper money and the nature of credit; but, while it lasted, it also brought serious mischief by its depreciation of the bank note in value to the extent, at one time, of from 25 to 30 per cent. Almost the greatest of the many great benefits conferred on commerce by Sir Robert Peel was his Act of 1819, abolishing the restrictions on gold and silver currency and the forced issue of paper money. The directors of the Bank of England were still allowed to issue as many notes as they chose, but they were compelled to exchange them for gold on demand, and thus were virtually prohibited from giving out more than the public felt it safe to take at the full price of their equivalent in bullion. This was a national avowal of the principle that money, that is, the circulating medium, is not gold and silver alone, but gold, silver, paper, and anything else which can be regarded as a trustworthy agent in the interchange of commodities, and the bartering of capital, labour, and the like.

This was the principle which gave vitality to such concerns as the one of which Samuel Gurney was for a long time the head, and which, not a little through his help, has been great source of extension to modern commerce. 'Credit,' said Daniel Webster, 'has done more a thousand times to enrich nations than all the mines of all the world.' Were we forced now to carry on all our commercial dealings by means of gold and silver, it would only be possible, in spite of the increase of our stores of these metals, to continue a very small portion of our present trade. This, however, no one now attempts to do. The legal currency, whether gold, silver, or bank-notes, is only a sort of pocket-money in comparison with the real currency of trade. It serves for the smaller sort of retail purchases, for payments across the counter and the

like; but the great merchant has not in his possession all through his lifetime actual money equal in amount to the paper equivalent of money that passes through his hands every day of the week. All his important business is carried on exclusively by means of bills, bonds, cheques, and the other materials included in the terms 'commercial debt' and 'credit.' His ready money is lodged with a banker, as has been the practice since the beginning of the eighteenth century, except that now he draws cheques for so much as he needs for use from time to time, instead of receiving from his banker a number of promissory notes, to be passed to and fro, while the actual deposit was in the banker's hands to be used in whatever safe and profitable way he chose. Now, however, the cheques are in comparatively few cases exchanged for real money, they being piled up by the bankers into whose hands they come and paired off one with another, or in heaps together, while the deposits that they represent are left untouched. In this way the money does double work, being itself available for use by the banker or his agents, while the equivalent cheques are quite as serviceable for all the purposes of trade. And this is only the simplest instance of the modern principle of credit. In all sorts of ways, every bit of money and everything else that can be taken as a representative of wealth, whether actual or prospective, is turned over and over, each turning being a creation, to all intents and purposes, of so much fresh money. A merchant, for example, buys a thousand pounds' worth of goods for export, say to India, China, or Australia. He pays for the same by means of a bill of exchange, accepted as soon as possible, but not payable till two or three months after date. The manufacturer or agent of whom he buys the goods, however, does not wait all that time for his money. In all probability he immediately gets the bill discounted, thereby losing some 15% or 20%, but having the sum of 980% or 985% available for appropriation

in other ways, and thus for the acquisition of fresh profits. Before the original bill falls due he has built perhaps twenty fresh transactions on the basis of the first one, and so, in effect, has turned his 1,000*l.* into 20,000*l.*, less the 300*l.* or 400*l.* that have been deducted by the bill-broker as discount. And the same original transaction has been made the groundwork of a number of other transactions on the part of the merchant who bought the goods. He bought them for 1,000*l.*, to sell again for, say 1,200*l.*, part of the difference being his profit, part being absorbed in freight, insurance, and so forth. He is not likely to be paid for the goods in less than six months' time; and he has to pay for them in two or three months. But long before either of those terms expires he has raised part of the money on the security of his bill of lading, and so is enabled to enter on other transactions, just as the manufacturer had done. Or he sends out his bill to some partner, agent, or deputy in the district to which the goods are consigned, and that, being accepted, is available for the payment of debts already contracted in that part or for immediate transmission home, or to some third place, for use in any way that is found desirable. In such ways as these, and they are numberless, a very small amount of actual money goes to the building up, on the one side, of a vast structure of credit, and, on the other, of a vast structure of commerce.

There was a hazy comprehension of this system long centuries ago. 'If you were ignorant of this, that credit is the greatest capital of all towards the acquisition of wealth,' said Demosthenes, 'you would be utterly ignorant.' But the modern theory of credit is very modern indeed, having almost its first exemplification, on a large scale, in the establishment of Overend, Gurney, and Company. This house, as we saw, was established to make a separate business of bill-discounting, much more complete and extensive than the chance trade in bills that had formerly been, and that continued to be, carried on by

bankers, merchants, and all sorts of irregular money-lenders. Very soon after the time of Samuel Gurney's supremacy in it, it began to assume gigantic proportions, and it was, for some thirty or forty years, the greatest discounting house in the world, the parent of all the later and rival establishments that have started up in London and elsewhere. At first only discounting bills, its founders soon saw the advantage of lending money on all sorts of other securities, and their cellars came to be loaded with a constantly varying heap of dock-warrants, bills of lading, shares in railways and public companies, and the like. To do this, of course, vast funds were necessary, very much in excess of the immense wealth accumulated by the Gurneys in Norwich and elsewhere. Therefore, having proved the value and stability of his business, Samuel Gurney easily persuaded those who had money to invest to place it in his hands, they receiving for the same a fixed and fair return of interest, and he obtaining with it as much extra profit as the fluctuations of the money market and the increasing needs of trade made possible. He became, in fact, a new sort of merchant, buying credit—that is, borrowing money—on the one hand, and selling credit—that is, lending money—on the other, and deriving from the trade his full share of profits.

Great help came to his money-making and to his commercial influence from the panic of 1825. That panic arose partly from the financial disorganization consequent on the enforcement of Sir Robert Peel's Act of 1819, very good in itself but promotive of much trouble until it had brought matters into a healthy condition. Its more immediate cause, however, was the excessive speculation in joint-stock companies at home as well as in continental mines, American cotton, and other branches of foreign commerce.* Several London banks

* This is an enumeration of the joint-stock companies projected in 1824 and 1825, the great years of joint-stock company mania:—

failed, and at least eighty country banks fell to the ground, the Bank of England itself being only saved by the accidental finding of two million one-pound notes that had been packed away and lost sight of some time before. Even Joseph John Gurney, much more of a philanthropist than a banker, suffered from the pressure. 'Business has been productive of trial to me,' he wrote in characteristic way in his journal, 'and has led me to reflect on the equity of God, who measures out His salutary chastisement, even in this world, to the rich as well as the poor. I can certainly testify that some of the greatest pains and most burdensome cares which I have had to endure have arisen out of being what is usually called a "monied man."'

His brother, however, was much more mixed up in the turmoil. 'Knowing intimately as he did the sufferings which awaited those who could no longer command credit or obtain supplies from other quarters,' said one of Samuel Gurney's old friends, 'his anxiety was felt more on others' account than his own,'—the fact being that his own financial dealings were so sound that he had no fear for himself, and only had to settle how to make most money with most secondary advantage to those he dealt with. 'His desire,' it is added, 'was to act fairly and justly to his fellow-creatures, as well as to himself; and thus did he move onwards cautiously and step by step through those troublous times, lest he should lead any into

error by his judgment. It was a remarkable sight to witness him plunge day by day into the vortex of City business and return thence to his own domestic hearth without any trace of a mammon-loving spirit.' We can well believe that the honest Quaker was reasonably free from the 'mammon-loving spirit;' but he knew well how to seek and secure his own advancement, and this he did very notably, by lending to many houses money enough to enable them to ride through their difficulties, and so bringing to himself much fresh favour and much new custom during the following years. From this time forth he came to be known as a banker's banker, taking the place, for many, of the Bank of England. Hundreds of private banks fell into the way of sending him, from time to time, their surplus cash, finding that they were as sure of getting it back whenever they wanted it, as if they had lodged it in the Bank of England, and that in the meanwhile they were getting higher interest for it than the Bank would have granted. 'We do not feel the slightest dependence upon the Bank of England,' said one of the number, Mr. Robert Carr Glyn, before the Bank Charter Committee in 1832, 'nor do we feel the slightest obligation to it in any way.'

Samuel Gurney was thus the cause of an injury to the Bank of England for which he was not easily forgiven. And in other ways the old Bank privileges were being assailed during these years. In 1826 an Act was passed sanctioning the establishment of joint-stock banks throughout the country, except in London and within a distance of sixty-five miles thereof. 'The present system of law as to banks,' said Lord Liverpool, in supporting the measure, 'must now be altered in one way or another. It is the most absurd, the most inefficient legislation; it has not one recommendation to stand upon. The present system is one of the fullest liberty as to what is rotten and bad, but of the most complete restriction as to all that is good. By it a cobbler, or a cheesemonger,

	Capital.
74 Mining Companies	£38,370,000
29 Gas ditto	12,077,000
20 Insurance ditto	35,820,000
28 Investment ditto	52,600,000
54 Canal and Railroad ditto	44,051,000
67 Steam ditto	8,555,500
11 Trading ditto	10,450,000
26 Building ditto	13,781,000
23 Provision ditto	8,360,000
292 Miscellaneous ditto	148,108,600
624	£372,173,100

Of these, however, only 245 companies were actually formed, and the actual capital paid up amounted to only £17,605,625.

may issue his notes, without any proof of his ability to meet them, and unrestricted by any check whatever; while, on the other hand, more than six persons, however respectable, are not permitted to become partners in a bank with whose notes the whole business of the country might be transacted. Altogether the whole system is so absurd, both in theory and practice, that it would not appear to deserve the slightest support if it was attentively considered even for a single moment.' It would certainly have been altered long before, but for the influence of the Bank of England directors, eager to have as much of a monopoly as possible in their own hands. This bill, permitting joint-stock banks at a distance, however, was passed in 1826, and a few years later the wonderful discovery was made that joint-stock banks were legal even in London, and had been so from the beginning. James William Gilbart, having begun life as a banker's clerk in 1813, and after twelve years so spent, having gained fresh experience and influence in Ireland, pointed out that the Act of 1709, while forbidding joint-stock banks of issue, offered no obstacle to joint-stock banks of deposit. The consequence was the immediate formation of the London and Westminster Bank in 1833. Before that bank was fairly established, however, Parliament had complied with the demands of the free traders in money and passed a bill intended to give legal countenance to the institutions against which it was found that there was no legal prohibition. Therein it was 'declared and enacted that any body politic or corporate, or society, or company, or partnership, although consisting of more than six persons, might carry on the trade or business of banking in London or within sixty-five miles thereof.' That was a full concession of the grand point at issue. Other matters of dispute arose, and for the first four years of its history the London and Westminster Bank was in constant altercation and litigation. But at last common sense prevailed, and

the London and Westminster Bank not only entered itself upon a career of wonderful prosperity, but also became the parent of a number of other joint-stock banks, destined in due time, we may fairly believe, altogether to supersede the older private banks.

It was really to atone for that apparent infringement of the Bank's monopoly, though ostensibly, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day, 'to prevent as much as possible fluctuations in the currency, of the nature of those which have, at different times, occasioned hazard to the Bank and embarrassment to the country,' that the Bank Charter Act of 1844 was passed. Sir Robert Peel entered heartily into the work, thinking that thus he would complete the financial reform begun by his Act of 1819, and in some of the wealthiest bank directors he had very eloquent and persuasive guides. Part of the new Charter was unquestionably beneficial. By it the Bank was separated into two distinct establishments, one solely for issuing bank-notes, the other for transacting ordinary business. The banking department is only a huge joint-stock bank, and deals with the public just in the same way as do the London and Westminster, or Coutts's or Child's banks. The issue department, subsidised by Government, receives all the bullion intended to be held in reserve and promulgates an exact equivalent for it in bank-notes, issuing also paper money, for which there is no corresponding bullion, to the extent of 14,650,000*l.* on the security of Government debts and other securities produced by Government. Whether the Bank Charter has on the whole been helpful to the progress of commerce need not here be discussed. It has been, beyond all question, very helpful to the Bank and to the many wealthy men whose wealth has brought them into connection with it.

Among these, though as wealthy as any, Samuel Gurney was not reckoned. His house was too much in rivalry with one branch of the Bank of England's business for him

to have more connection with it than was necessary. He took no prominent part, therefore, either in favour or in disapproval of the reconstruction of the Bank Charter in 1844. But he was as zealous as any of the men in office in Threadneedle Street in his opposition to the movement in favour of joint-stock undertakings. It may be that in this he was somewhat influenced by his anticipations of the rivalry that would come through them to the vast business that he had formed. The only rivals that appeared during his lifetime, however, were private speculators. Of these, the first was Richard Sanderson, originally a clerk of his own. After learning the mystery of successful money-lending in the house of Overend, Gurney, and Company, Sanderson started in business for himself. He married a daughter of Lord Canterbury's, and became a Member of Parliament, thus advancing his social position, but perhaps damaging his commercial prospects. He failed in 1847; soon revived the business in partnership with a Mr. Sandeman, and therein prospered for a few years, to fail again in 1857. More uniformly successful was another and younger bill-broker, a Mr. Alexander, who had for some time been a clerk in the banking-house of Roberts, Curtis, and Company. In 1856, the year of Samuel Gurney's death, it was estimated that Overend, Gurney, and Company held deposits amounting to 8,000,000*l.*, while Alexander and Company were in possession of documents valued at 4,000,000*l.*, and Sanderson and Sandeman of 3,500,000*l.* worth of paper; the wealth of the three houses together being no less than 15,500,000*l.*

During many years before that, Samuel Gurney had had very little to do with the business, its chief management being then in the hands of Mr. David Barclay Chapman. While he was young and vigorous, Gurney made money-getting his one grand business. It is said of him that when once an elder friend warned him against too close attention to the things of this

world, he replied that he could not help himself; he could not live without his business. During the last ten or twelve years of his life, however, he left nearly all the management in the hands of others, and found his occupation in enjoyment of his princely fortune and application to various charitable and philanthropic undertakings. Charitable he had been all through his life. 'Many are the solid remembrances of the more prominent features of Mr. Gurney's charities,' says his very friendly biographer; 'but besides those deeds more generally known to the public, there were many lesser streams of silent benevolence still flowing from the fountain of love to God and man, which spread refreshment around. We have already alluded to his kindly aid to many members of his large family connection, but it might be said that not only there, but elsewhere, he was wonderfully gifted, not only with the will, but with the power to help. Besides his efficiency in action, his very presence seemed to impart strength, courage, and calm in any emergency, whilst his practical wisdom, his clear and decisive mind and noble spirit of charity led many to bring cases of difficulty before him, knowing from experience how sure and effective was his aid. It may be truly said of Samuel Gurney that he loved to do good service, whether by advice or money—by his sound judgment or well-apportioned aid. He really took trouble to serve his fellow-creatures, and a narration of his mere alms-giving, extensive as it was, would give a very limited idea of the good he effected during the journey of life.' During many years of his life he is reported to have spent 10,000*l.* a year in charities, and one year, it is said, the amount exceeded 16,000*l.*

Many are the records of his kindly disposition, shown in little ways and great.

'One afternoon,' says one of his clerks, 'as Mr. Gurney was leaving Lombard Street, I saw him taking up a large hamper of game, to carry to his carriage. I immediately came forward and took it from him.'

He looked pleased, and in his powerful and hearty voice, exclaimed, "Dost thou know H——'s in Leadenhall Market?" I replied in the affirmative. "Then go there and order thyself a right down good turkey, and put it down to my account."

A more important instance of his generosity is in the circumstance that when, on one occasion, a forgery had been committed to the injury of his Lombard Street house, and the culprit lay in prison with clear proof of guilt, Gurney refused to prosecute him and so obtained his release. At another time, we are told, 'one of the first silversmiths in the City, and a man of high esteem for his uprightness, was accused of forgery. The excitement as to the probable result of this inquiry was intense, and the opinions of men differed widely. On the morning of the decisive day,' says the merchant who tells the story, 'I chanced to hear that my friend Gurney was prepared to stand by the prisoner in the dock. I immediately proceeded to Lombard Street, where I found him occupied with the vast interests of his business, and asked him hastily whether common report were true. Upon which he said, "After a most anxious investigation of the matter, I am firmly convinced of that man's innocence. I deem it my duty to express this conviction publicly, and will join him in the felon's dock." And most assuredly he went; nor could any one easily forget the intense sensation produced in the crowd of spectators when, on the prisoner being conducted to his place, the stately figure of Samuel Gurney presented itself to the public gaze by the side of the innocent silversmith.'

In mitigation of the laws regarding forgery, in company with his brother-in-law, Thomas Fowell Buxton, Samuel Gurney first showed himself to the world as a philanthropist. He also took a lively interest in all plans for improving and increasing refuges and reformatories. He was for many years, after the death of William Allen, treasurer to the British and Foreign

School Society, and to other like institutions he was always a good friend. Visiting Ireland in 1849, he astonished the inhabitants by the liberality with which he drained his purse to relieve them, when he could, amid their sufferings from the potato famine. At Ballina he found the town so full of paupers that there were none able to pay poor-rates, and the workhouse was consequently bankrupt. 'I found an execution put into it,' he said in one of his letters, 'and all the stock furniture is to be sold off this week, when the poor people will have to lie on straw, and the guardians must feed them as well as they can.' He bought up the whole of the furniture for 200*l.*, in order that, being his property, it might be saved from the creditors.

In 1848 Gurney gave 1,000*l.* to the government of Liberia, and he always took great interest in the prosperity of the little colony of freed slaves. Nor was he, like some anti-slavery worthies, careful only for the freedom of the blacks. In 1852 he sent a petition to the King of Prussia, on behalf of his dissenting subjects, praying that full religious liberty might be accorded them. The king answered that he did not mean to do anything that could distress 'his good friend Gurney.'

Gurney was not a bigot. Some one having written to him, in 1855, complaining of the way in which Fox and Penn had been spoken of by Lord Macaulay, in his 'History of England' he answered thus:—'It is a little mortifying that Macaulay should so have held up our honourable predecessors; not that they were perfect, or were ever held up as such, as far as I know; but they were extraordinary men, wonderfully elucidating and maintaining the truth. I am not prepared, however, to say that Fox was clear of eccentricities, and that, at times, he was not, to a certain extent, under such influence on his conduct; but, taking him for all in all, he was wonderfully gifted and enlightened. It will probably be considered by Friends whether there should be an answer somewhat official to these

attacks on our two worthies. I rather lean to it, although it would be impossible to reach wherever Macaulay's book may go; yet, if well done, it might have a beneficial effect upon the public mind, and upon our young people. There is, however, one consolation: "The truth as it is in Jesus!"—the truth as maintained by Friends is unchangeable, and remains the same, however feeble, or even faulty, its supporters may have been and are.' That letter was written from Nice, whither Samuel Gurney had gone very soon after the death of his wife, hoping to improve the health that had been greatly shattered by his loss and the anxiety that preceded it. But in that he was mistaken. Growing worse in the spring of 1856, he hurried homewards, hoping to end his days in his own country and among his kindred. He reached Paris, but could go no further. There he died, on the 5th of June, 1856, seventy years of age, and one of the richest and most envied men in Europe.

We need not trace the history of his family any further; but the history of the house which became famous all the world over, chiefly through his enterprise and ability, may be followed right to the end. Samuel Gurney had not much to do with the business of Overend, Gurney, and Company for some time previous to his death. On his withdrawal from it, the chief management was during many years with Mr. David Barclay Chapman, who retired, in his turn, at the end of 1857, having first led the establishment safely through the panic of that year. Then the business fell into less skilful hands, and the disastrous failure of last May was the consequence.

The circumstances of that failure are well worth careful noting, helping us, as they do, to an understanding of the entire series of financial troubles to which it led the way, or served as a stepping-stone. The difficulties began last year, or even sooner, convincing proof—to those who cared to be convinced—of the weak condition of the business being in its exchange from private hands

into the form of a Limited Liability Company. Those difficulties had, in part, resulted from the great error, persistently avoided by old Samuel Gurney, of combining commercial speculation with legitimate financial operations. A man who simply lends money of his own can never fail, so long as he makes profits enough to pay his working expenses. If he borrows money to lend again at a profit, the principal part of all bankers' business nowadays, he is still quite safe, provided he takes care to deal only with customers who can be relied upon, and who are pledged to return the funds lent to them within reasonable time. But if he borrows money on the pretence of lending it for short terms and to trusty borrowers, and then locks it up in mining undertakings, railway companies, or other commercial speculations, whence it cannot possibly be drawn out at a short notice if necessary, he has only himself to thank when he gets into trouble. This seems to have been the grievous fault of Overend, Gurney, and Company, before it was reorganized, under the Limited Liability Act, in August, 1865. It was continued after that change; and the great discounting house found itself worse off than ever in the spring.

Its embarrassments were shared by other banking establishments; the high rates of interest offered by the trading or mining companies for all money lent to them being temptations too great for resistance. Nearly all the banks that failed during the summer of 1866 owed their failure, in part, to this source of weakness. The Birmingham and the Preston Banks, last in the order of failure, had been crippled for years through their having made large advances to speculators in the iron and cotton trades. The Agra and Masterman's Bank, with a much larger field of operations, had erred in the same way, risking its safety through connection with the great cotton houses of Bombay and other parts of India. The house of Overend, Gurney, and Company, as we saw, was chiefly involved with railway and iron contractors.

This seems to have been the immediate cause of the disasters. On the 9th of May, three suits brought against the Mid-Wales Railway Company by Overend, Gurney, and Company, and two other discounting houses, were decided in the Court of Common Pleas. The suits were for bills of exchange amounting to 60,000*l.*, drawn by the three houses named and accepted by the Railway Company, but dishonoured by it on their falling due. The Court decided that the Railway Company had no power to accept such bills, and that they, and all others like them, were mere waste paper. By these transactions themselves Overend, Gurney, and Company did not lose much; but they were known to hold immense quantities of the same sort of paper; and, if all this was good for nothing, the establishment was in a very dangerous position. That, at any rate, was the general opinion among City men on the morning of the 10th of May. The result was a rush on the Lombard Street house, which ended in the closing of its doors before the day was out, and next morning all England was startled by the news that it had failed with liabilities exceeding 10,000,000*l.* That news led immediately to the breaking of the Bank of London for about 4,000,000*l.*, the Consolidated Bank for nearly as much, and several other establishments for lesser sums: the crowning though not the final event of the panic being the failure of the Agra and Masterman's Bank for upwards of 15,000,000*l.* To say that the total losses occasioned by the panic amounted to 60,000,000*l.* would be certainly within the mark.

But they were not all losses; and the financial blunders to which we have referred were not the only causes of the catastrophe. Two very different sorts of people have made profit out of the troubles of their neighbours. Of the one sort are the great capitalists who have had money to lend at the exorbitant rate of ten per cent., or at a higher interest still; the body of rich men whose most successful possession is the Bank of England, endowed with very considerable privileges

and opportunities of money-making in return for its services to the State. The other and much less respectable class comprises a body of men known vaguely as stock-jobbers, whose wits are their principal capital, and who have lately found congenial employment for those wits in what are called 'bearing' operations. In Stock Exchange jargon, 'bulls' are the jobbers who speculate for a rise in the price of shares, that is, who buy when shares are low, with the intention of selling them again when they have risen in price; 'bears' are those who make their profits out of a fall in the value of shares. The inferior and less honest stockjobbers were 'bulls' last year and ever since the mania for limited liability companies that began in 1858, making it their business to bolster up the companies whose shares they really or nominally held, till they could be disposed of at a satisfactory profit: during the last eight or ten months they have been 'bears,' setting themselves to bear down or depreciate all sorts of establishments, in order that they may make money out of the fall. This they do by straining to the utmost the Stock Exchange rule which provides that stocks and shares, though they may be bought or sold any day, shall only be delivered or transferred at stated periods,—generally once a fortnight for ordinary commercial shares, and once a month for Consols and the like. 'To the uninitiated,' as the author of a clever little book on 'The Profits of Panics' has said, 'it may be unnecessary to explain that this selling of shares on the Stock Exchange does not require that the seller should have in his possession what he sells. The sale is always made for delivery at a future day, and even at that time it is very rare for the shares themselves to be delivered, but merely the difference of price between the quotations on the day the shares were sold and that on which they are delivered. Let us suppose that, on the 1st of March, Mr. Smith sells a hundred bank shares at 14*l.* premium. Smith has not, and never had, these hundred

shares, but he is bound to deliver them on a given day, say the 14th of the same month. If he can in the meantime procure these shares at, say 10*l.* premium, he will be the gainer of 4*l.* per share, or make 400*l.* without putting his hand in his pocket. But if, on the other hand, the value of these shares rise in the interval, and Smith cannot buy them for, say 18*l.* premium, it is very easy to see that he will be a loser to the amount of 4*l.* per share,

or 400*l.* on the transaction. It being, therefore, Smith's interest to procure these shares as low as possible, he does his best to run down their value.' Everybody knows how unscrupulously and disastrously this practice was adopted during last May and June. The stock-jobbers are more than half responsible for the failure of Overend, Gurney, and Company, and for all the other incidents of the panic of 1866.

UP AND DOWN THE LONDON STREETS.

BY MARK LEMON.

CHAPTER IX.

ST. JAMES'S was made a royal palace by Henry VIII., as we have said, and little remains of it but the red-brick gateway, around which chairmen and flunkies have fought many a battle for precedence in days gone by. What is called the Chapel Royal was also part of the old building, and for which our great-grandmothers were wont to dress with as much care as for the Opera, and by their ogling and sighing aroused the anger of Bishop Burnett:

'When Burnett perceived that the beautiful
dames,

Who flocked to the chapel of holy St. James,
On their lovers the kindest of looks did bestow,
And smiled not on him while he bellowed
below,

To the Princess he went
With pious intent,

'The dangerous ill in the Church to prevent;'

and was laughed at for his pains.

The great Duke of Wellington was a constant attendant at the Chapel Royal when in town.

There are few historical associations (except drawing-rooms, levées, and state-balls) associated with St. James's Palace; and some of those we do not care to mention. Queen Mary died here, as did Caroline, George IV.'s queen. Charles II. and the Old Pretender were born at St. James's; and here Charles I. passed the night before his execution. St. James's Street, in Strype's

time, was a spacious street, some of the houses having a terrace walk, ascended by steps in front of them, and was well inhabited by gentry, when on Tuesday evening, December 6th, 1670, Colonel Blood made his desperate attack on the Duke of Ormond, when on his way to Clarendon House, and in spite of the six walking footmen, dragged the duke from his coach, and carried his grace towards Tyburn, where he intended to have hanged him. The villains were pursued, and the duke discovered struggling in the mud in Piccadilly and rescued. Blood and his party escaped.

Edmund Waller, the poet, lived in St. James's Street, as did Gibbon the historian; and in St. James's Place, opposite, lived Addison in 1710. It was long the rage to frequent

'The Campus Martius of St. James's Street,
Where the beau's cavalry pass to and fro
Before they take the field in Rotten Row;
Where Brookes's Blues and Walter's light
dragoons
Dismount in files and ogle in platoons.'

Gilray, the great caricaturist, when insane, threw himself from the window of his lodging at No. 20, and was killed.

Lord Byron lived in lodgings in St. James's, at a time when it was necessary to carry pistols in his carriage on a visit to Tom Campbell at Sydenham; and amongst other

distinguished residents was Samuel Rogers, who lived at No. 22. Lord Byron has recorded the impression produced upon him by the almost fastidious elegance of the apartments.

Perhaps you would like to be introduced to Lord Byron as he appeared about 1809. 'His face was void of colour and he wore no whiskers. His eyes were grey, fringed with long black lashes, and his air was imposing but rather supercilious. He wore a very nar-

row cravat of white sarcenet, with the shirt collar falling over it, then in remarkable contrast to the stiff starched cravats generally in vogue. A black coat and waistcoat and very broad white trousers of Russia duck in the morning, and of jean in the evening. His watch-chain had a number of small gold seals appended to it, and was looped up to a button of his waistcoat.'

St. James's Street has long been a favourite locality for clubs, and (as it is no longer) for gaming-

TIERN TURNPIKE.

bouses, or halls, as they were most appropriately called from the misery they occasioned, and after a dark room in St. James's Palace where hazard was played.*

* The internal decorations of Crockford's cost over 94,000*l.*, and everything that any member had to lose, and chose to risk, was swallowed up. 'The Pluto became Pintos, and retired,' says a writer of the time, 'much as an Indian chief from a hunting-ground, when there is not game enough left for his tribe.' Crockford's ceased as a club, and became elevated into the Wellington Dining-rooms in 1862.

Brookes's Club is probably the most aristocratic club in London, and had formerly amongst its members the Prince of Wales, and other royal personages. It was a great betting club, and the old betting-book, still preserved, is a great curiosity from the oddity of some of the bets it contains. The club was formed by Brookes, a wine-merchant, described as one who

'Nursed in clubs, disdains a vulgar trade,
Exults in trust, and blushes to be paid.'

At one time an introduction to

Almack's in King Street, St. James's, was a passport to the world of fashion, and coveted accordingly; but the glory has departed, and the exclusive character of the assemblies at 'Willis's Rooms,' very greatly declined. Almack was a Scotchman, and opened his assembly under high patronage, Feb. 12, 1765. His real name is said to have been Ma'cal.

Let us now enter the Green Park (formerly Little St. James's Park), and away by Constitution Hill (memorable for three outrages against the dearest life in Great Britain, and the accident which ended the career of one of England's greatest statesman, Sir Robert Peel) to Hyde Park Corner, where Charles II., crossing the road almost unattended, met the Duke of York, and said to him, in reply to an expression of brotherly alarm, 'I am in no danger, James, for no man in England will take my life to make you king.' The arch now at the entrance of the Green Park is a poor adaptation from the Arch of Titus, and on the top of it is the arch-absurdity of London, the Duke of Wellington's statue. It was originally put up there for the benefit of 'Punch,' who certainly pulled it to pieces, although he could not pull it down.

Let us pause for a moment at the site of old Tattersall's, or The Corner, as it was called. Richard Tattersall, the founder, was training groom to the Duke of Kingston, brother of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and after the death of the duke, took no other service. He purchased the celebrated racehorse Highflyer for 2500*l*. The horse was the foundation of Tattersall's fortune, and he gave the name of Highflyer Hall to a house he built at Ely. Tattersall's was opened as an auction mart about 1795, when it stood on the verge of the 'five fields' which sloped down to the stream which carried off the superfluous water of Hyde Park. The five fields were celebrated for nightingales and footpads. What a change in less than a hundred years! Belgravia, a new London, grew round Tattersall's, and has at last squeezed it out of its long-known corner. Charles Mathews the elder, and celebrated

mimic, often accompanied one of the Mr. Tattersalls to Newmarket races, and upon a certain occasion took it into his head to imitate his friend the auctioneer when selling the blood stock usually offered for sale there. Tattersall bore this very well for some time. 'No. 44,' said Mr. Tattersall. 'No. 44,' said Mathews. 'A brown filly, by Smolenski—what shall we say to begin?' said Mr. T. 'A brown filly, by Smolenski—what shall we say to begin?' echoed Mathews. 'One hundred guineas, to begin?' asks Mr. Tattersall. 'One hundred guineas,' answered Mathews. 'It's yours, Mr. Mathews, and thank you,' said Mr. Tattersall, knocking down a very weedy affair, to the astonishment of his tormentor.

So far westward, we must take a peep at Ranelagh, and the merry ghosts of those who crowded its rotunda, which stood on the site of Ranelagh House, built in 1691 by Charles II.'s favourite earl of that name.

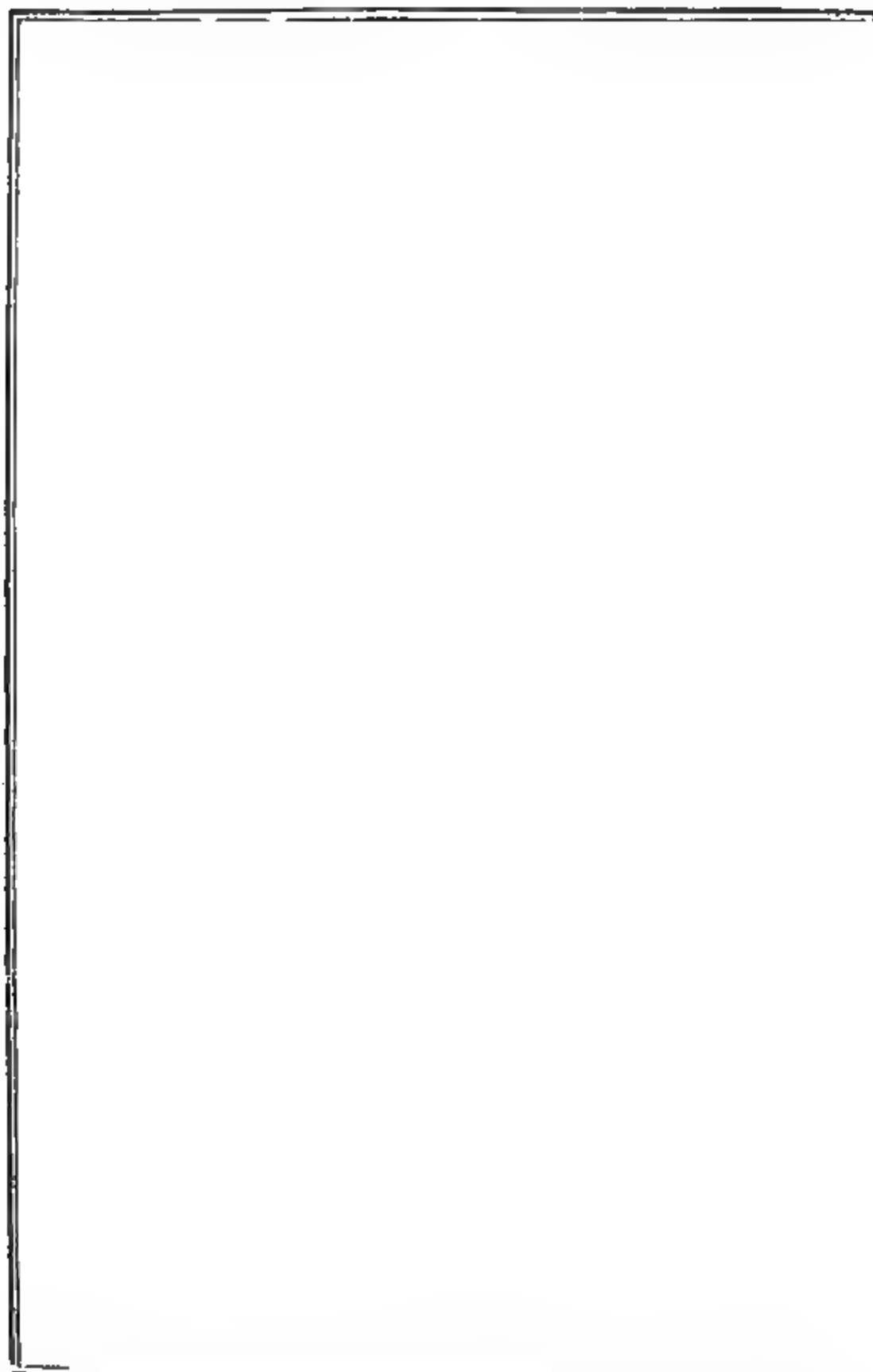
The older gardens of Vauxhall, however, claim precedence, although not in Westminster.

Fulkes Hall was called after one of King John's Norman warriors, and the name corrupted into Fauxes-hall, Foxhall, and Vauxhall, and Guy Fawkes appears to have had some connection with it. It has been the prison of Lady Arabella Stuart, and the refuge of the gay and gallant Duke of Monmouth after Sedgmoor's fight, and the home of Ambrose Philips, the pastoral poet. When it became a place of entertainment it was called New Spring Gardens. Pepys went there 'by water, to observe the humours of the citizens pulling of cherries, and to see the fine people walking, hear the nightingales and other birds, and the fiddles, and the harp, and the Jews' trump.' He fell in company with Harry Killigrew and young Newport, and their mad talk and other improprieties made his heart ache.

Who has not been to Vauxhall with the 'Spectator' as Sir Roger de Coverley? If any here, let them turn to No. 383 in those enchanting volumes, and join that pleasant party; and there are other happy

ghosts with whom old Vauxhall might be revisited, and not only at the 'witching hour of night.' In later times some of our best singers

took the place of the nightingales, and Braham, Incledon, Storace, Mrs. Billington, and choirs of others were wont to charm the ear of our grand-



OLD VAUXHALL GARDENS, LONDON (1746).

fathers. What a fairy place it seemed to us!—we won't say how many years ago—and how one walked and walked, and gaped, and stood in breathless wonder as Madame Sequi

climbed up that dark thread to a blazing temple high up amongst the clouds; or with what zest one ate those wafers of ham and Lilliputian chickens which cost so much, but

for which we paid cheerfully in compliment to the affable and graceful Mr. Simpson's bow and welcome to the 'Royal Property.' We are glad that there is nothing of Vauxhall Gardens remaining—that they are entirely and utterly effaced, affectionately buried in the past!

In 1742 the gardens of Ranelagh House were opened to the public

under the direction of Lacy, the Drury Lane manager, as a winter Vauxhall, and were frequented by princes, princesses, dukes, and nobility, and much mob besides (says Walpole), and my Lord Chesterfield was so fond of it that he had all his letters addressed there. The rotunda was 185 feet in diameter, warmed by a centre apparatus, and the pro-

Old CARLTON BATH HOUSE.

menade matted. The interior was fitted with boxes for refreshments, and lighted by chandeliers hanging from the highly-painted ceiling. There was a Venetian pavilion in the centre of a lake in the garden to which visitors were rowed in boats, and the grounds were laid out in green alleys and dark walks. Concerts were given, the music composed

by Dr. Arne, and here the first compositions of the Catch Club were performed. The admission was a shilling, and there Sunday tea-drinking, masquerades, and ridottes were held at intervals, to which the admission was a guinea. Masquerades are said to have been in fashion at the Court of Edward III. (1340), and in the reign of Charles II.

masquerades were common among the citizens. They were suppressed in the reign of George I., as the bishops and clergy preached against them--no less than six masquerades being subscribed for in a month. They were revived and carried to a shameful excess (according to Mortimer) by the connivance of the

Government, and a ticket for one or two at Ranelagh were subscribed for at twenty-five guineas each (1776). Of late years masquerades have been only scenes of senseless noise and debauchery, including supper and a first-rate headache in the morning. The downfall of Ranelagh was the French Revolution. Until then the

CHATELAIN FUX HOUSE.

tradesman, in his sober suit, never thought of mixing with swords and bag-wigs, the hoops and satin trains of his superiors in rank, even at Ranelagh, although the price of admission was low and the same to all. But the Revolution swept away such invidious distinctions. Maid-

servants acquired rights which now exhibit our cooks in crinoline: dress ceased to be distinctive of a class, and so Ranelagh and Vauxhall faded away, and Cremorne flourishes in its stead. In 1802 the installation ball of the Knights of the Bath was held here, and the Peace fête in 1803.

devoted much pains to searching the rate-books of the metropolis, and to whose labours we have been frequently indebted, discovered that one Richard Baker, devised to his wife Mary, Piccadilly Hall, which stood at the now corners of Windmill Street and Coventry Street, when all the intervening space round about, and to St. Martin's Lane, behind the King's Mews, was open fields, over which, after Lammass, the parishioners had a right of common. Piccadilly Hall became a house of entertainment and gaming, with handsome gravel walks and an upper and lower bowling green. It was pulled down in 1685, but the Fives Court remained to my time; and there the noble art of self-defence

was practised before the noble, the gentle, and the blackguard.

'But the club pugilistic,
Which held the art fistic,
In such estimation at last has gone dead.'

About the middle of the Haymarket was a windmill then at the Cawsey Head, and over against the street which preserves its name, stood Shaver's Hall, a gaming-house, built by the barber of the Earl of Pembroke, after Spring Gardens was put down.

Its Tennis Court remains in James Street, Haymarket, and where the door is shown through which Charles II. and Mistress 'Moll' Davis used to enter from the King's Mews.

A ROUND OF DAYS.

I SANG to my heart in the sunshine of May,
And the garrulous bird on the sycamore spray
Sang to his mate in the nest;
'Sweetheart, the daffodil blooms on the lea,
The blossoms are thick upon bramble and tree;
And all through the long, merry year we will be
Treu und Fest, Treu und Fest!'

I sang to my heart in the burning July,
And the golden-haired sun in a sapphire sky
Uplifted his fiery crest;
And the thousand-tongued land was melodious with song—
'Oh, the world shall be merry, the days shall be long,
And love in the sunshine is valiant and strong—
Treu und Fest, Treu und Fest!'

I sang to my heart in the wane of the year,
And the glare of the sunset hung lurid and drear
Far down in the sorrowful west;
The nest was forsaken, the sparrow had fled,
The music was hushed and the blossoms were dead;
But a voice through the silence and solitude said—
'Treu und Fest, Treu und Fest!'

And still sings that voice in the wind and the snow,
'There is light after darkness, and joy after woe,
And the love that is tried is the best;
I care not though tempest be black in the sky,
Though the bird may be fickle, and blossoms may die,
What matter? My darling shall find me for aye
Treu und Fest, Treu und Fest!'

THE EPERGNE.

H EAT! there was heat in Ravenna
 On the last of the days of July ;
 The streets were as streets in a furnace,
 As blinding to brain and to eye ;
 The light, how it rain'd from the zenith !
 To brave it was simply to die.

The gables and porches fantastic
 Their shadows capriciously cast,
 And, creeping along by the houses,
 A priest or two silently pass'd,—
 Nothing more, till the noon had departed
 And sunset and shade came at last.

Then to steal down the street to a garden,
 All black with the sycamore's gloom,
 Encircling a mansion of granite
 As solemn and square as a tomb,—
 With windows not wider than loopholes
 And portals befitting a tomb.

I could not resist it,—that garden,
 So black in its sycamore night,
 So gloomy and cool and inviting,
 • With branches excluding the light,
 With broad waving sycamore branches
 Deliciously cool to the sight.

And there at a window, a curtain
 Of silken embroidery swung,
 With stripings of amber and purple,
 And bullion that heavily hung,—
 And to one of the sycamore branches
 A corner, by accident, clung.

By accident only a corner
 'The branch of the sycamore raised,
 And what, if a moment beneath it
 I linger'd and furtively gazed ?
 Enough that, entranced and bewildered,
 I hopelessly linger'd and gazed.

Ah ! never did man in Ravenna
 More radiant vision behold,—
 A woman with hair like a fountain,
 Sun-lighted and gleaming with gold ;
 With features deliciously pensive,
 And form of the Italian mould.

She heard not, she saw not my coming,
 On the task of the moment intent,—
 On a golden epergne she was heaping
 Rich fruits all confusedly blent ;
 And alike to the gold and the fruitage
 The charm of her beauty she lent.

The grapes she was poisoning reflected
 The light of her purple-black eyes,
 And the flame of the cheeks of the peaches
 Had part in *her* cheek's burning dyes,—
 But, red to the heart, the pomegranate,
 With lips unsuccessfully vies.

A moment, and only a moment,
 I linger'd to gaze at the room;
 But, far from the blazing Ravenna,
 And far from the sycamore's gloom,
 My heart with its treasures has hoarded
 That scene in the house like a tomb.

And out of the scene of the moment
 A picture it slowly has made,
 Of the face and the fruit it bent over,
 A picture that never will fade,—
 'The Epergne' is the name that I give it,
 This picture that never can fade.

W.S.

A RAMBLE ROUND THE ROYAL ARSENAL.

A SHORT time ago I was sitting over a prolonged breakfast at my club in St. James's, helping my digestion with the morning paper, when my eye was attracted by a grand description of the visit to Woolwich of some distinguished foreign princes, who were the 'lions' of the season, *pro tem*.

There was the usual grand review, and intricate manœuvring, helped out, I have no doubt, by clouds of smoke. General This took the command, ably assisted by Captain That, with half a dozen letters after his name. Splendid sight! galloping of Horse Artillery! firing of big guns! thousands of spectators! and so on, followed by a swell lunch at the R.A. mess, and afterwards a 'minute inspection' (that was the term) of the Royal Arsenal.

Now, I had often wished to see the wonderful machinery, and the other attractions of that remarkable place; and, curiously enough, I had that very morning received a most pressing invitation from my old College chum, Bob —, now quartered at Woolwich, to pay him a visit for that very purpose, and (as he expressed himself) 'do the thing entirely.' He begged me to lose no time, as he was about to retire from the service, but to take the one o'clock train from London Bridge that very day. Nothing loth (after a good lunch to prepare me for the labours before me), I took my ticket for the Arsenal Station, by the North Kent railway, and was soon looking down chim-

neys and passing through many unpleasant odours, seated in a not over-comfortable carriage.

The open country we never reached; and all the way down the line the natives seemed to be busily engaged in bricks and mortar, as if London were not large enough, and no time should be lost in doubling its size. Arrived at my destination, I met my spruce military friend, whose warm greeting was rather too much for my lavender kids, the pipe-clay from his regimental gloves leaving a very decided mark upon them.

(Query, why do military men still so delight in pipe-clay?—can no substitute be found for that obnoxious dust?)

As we emerged from the station, a stream of men and boys were all hurrying in one direction; these were the workmen going back to the Arsenal after their dinner. We joined the crowd, which was increasing every moment from every bye-street, like a river making its way to the sea; and proceeding in the direction of a bell which was loudly ringing, we found ourselves in a wide open square, covered by a mass of human beings steering for a pair of large iron gates. Loud cries from itinerant venders of apples, nuts, &c., rang through the air; and my friend seizing me by the arm, we were carried by the throng through the gateway, and emerged almost breathless on the other side. Here we paused to recover. Bob arranged his uniform, and agreed

with me that another time, perhaps, it would be better to enter either before or after the workmen.

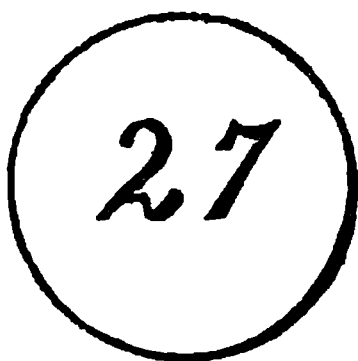
We saw the crowd inside diverging in opposite directions, taking the various roads which led to their several workshops; and, whilst waiting for the men to commence their work, Bob gave me the history of the spot upon which we stood.

‘Long, long ago, a dense forest extended from Shooter’s Hill down to the river, close to the fishing hamlet of Woolwich, part of which was, by some ancient speculator, turned into a rabbit-warren (the street close by is still called Warren Lane), and no one seems to have had any idea as to its future greatness, till the year 1716, when a sad accident occurred at the Royal Cannon Foundry at Moorfields, in London. Some captured French guns were being melted down and re-cast; and, a short time previous to the furnace being tapped, a Swiss-German officer named Schalch saw that the moulds were damp, and informed the superintendent of it: he was, however, only laughed at for his pains; but the metal on entering the moulds was blown in every direction; the building was destroyed, and several of those present perished at the time. Schalch was now inquired for by the Government, and requested to select a site for a new foundry further from town; and he pitched upon the Warren at Woolwich. Suitable buildings were soon erected, and the successful Schalch placed in charge, where he remained for many years. Such was the beginning of the Royal Arsenal, which has gradually grown so as to cover

300 acres of ground, and to give employment to 5000 men and boys, assisted by the labours of upwards of 100 steam-engines. It was the Crimean war, however, which extended the Arsenal to its present size. Economy had reduced our warlike stores to the lowest possible ebb, and therefore, when the emergency arose, the augmentation was all the greater, and 15,000 men and boys worked day and night to supply the missiles for Sebastopol.

Mr. Gladstone has now brought the numbers down to barely 5000, many of whom are pensioned soldiers. They are a well-conducted and orderly body of men, never having a strike or combination against their employers, and earning good average wages, mostly by piece-work. They are drawn from all parts of the country; the common labourers being principally Irish, and the more skilled artisans Scotch. They are obliged to be under forty years of age before their admission, and are kept very strictly down to certain rules and regulations. For instance, a man may absent himself from his work for twenty hours in a month, without any fault being found with him, but if he takes more he is liable to be discharged. They have fifty-six working-hours in the week; and when from pressure of business these are extended, they receive half as much pay again for the overtime. During the Crimean war, they often worked throughout two nights in the week in addition to the usual day-labour.

As soon as a man is engaged, three metal tickets, with a number upon each, are given him; thus—



the first one having only his number upon it; the second, one mark additional; the third, two marks: so, on coming to his work at six o'clock in the morning, he leaves his first

ticket; on his return after breakfast, the second; after dinner the third; and before going home at night a boy comes round and restores his three tickets again.

The ticket-clerk keeps a record of each man; and in this manner a late-comer or an absentee is easily detected.

By this time there were only a few stragglers to be seen; we followed the direction of the larger stream, and saw them pouring through a doorway into their factory, each man depositing, at a little pay-wicket, the aforesaid ticket.

We first looked into an old-fashioned building, the delight of our friend Schalch, many years ago (where the brass guns were cast before Armstrong was heard of); and a beautiful sight it must have been to see the bronze metal pouring and seething into the upright moulds, changing its colour every minute! Now, alas! the glory of this building is departed. Brass has given way to steel, and nothing but a few insignificant castings mark the spot so much esteemed in by-gone days.

Passing on to the next doorway, which was opened to us by a one-armed porter (his other arm having been severed by a shell in the trenches of Sebastopol), we entered a large factory, filled with revolving wheels and bands. There were lathes for about 500 men, driven by two large engines; many of these, however, were at this time unoccupied.

A small side-room first attracted our attention, where lead was being made into coils, ready for the bullet-machine in the large factory. This machine took the leaden rope, bit it into small pieces about an inch long, squeezed them into shape, and rifle bullets made their appearance in a little box on the floor. In this manner, 30,000 bullets a day were made for the Enfield rifle. The men worked hard indeed, losing no time, as they were paid by the piece. Their wages might average twenty-five shillings a week; mere labourers receiving their fourteen shillings and upwards, and artisans thirty shillings and more.

As we sauntered down the room, some were busy drilling shot and shell, while others were making metal fuzes of all kinds to explode them. We also noticed at the end

of the room several small cutting lathes, which were fed by boys with long sticks of boxwood. These were soon eaten up; and as a quantity of shavings appeared the only result, I was wondering what had become of all the wood, when a boy pulled open a drawer from underneath, nearly full of little plugs, which fit into the Enfield rifle bullet, to improve its practice. There were about twenty of these machines, and the boy said he thought they could make a million and a half in a week.

Bob explained to me that the Royal Arsenal was divided into three manufacturing departments—i.e., Laboratory, Gun, and Carriage—each presided over by an officer of the Royal Artillery. There was also the Store Department, which occupied a large space, and employed many hands.

Everywhere we came across fire-plugs and boxes or wheels, housed under scarlet-coloured tarpaulin. We were told that there was an abundant supply of water always, at a pressure of 100 lb. to the inch, and so effective were the precautions taken, that no serious fire had ever occurred.

Escaping from the dreadful whirl of these numberless wheels, we mounted some outside stairs, and entered the powder-barrel factory. It was most interesting to see the wood, which was already cut into proper lengths, placed in a circular drum-shaped saw, the teeth of which formed it into staves. The round tops and bottoms were made in another lathe; and then, by hydraulic pressure, these different parts were all compressed into a perfect barrel, ready to receive the hoops, which were easily hammered on afterwards. The workman at the principal machine said he could put a barrel together in four minutes.

We now retraced our steps, and crossed over the road to the paper factory, a very warm and steamy place, containing large tanks full of pulp. This was sucked by exhaustion upon metal fingers, already supplied with woollen gloves; and after being dried by steam, on extracting the glove, the paper cart-

ridge was found complete and ready to receive its bullet.

Upstairs we found boys busy at this operation; i.e., placing a bullet in each paper case, and tying it up to receive the powder, which is kept in sheds in a remote part of the Arsenal, far away from the workshops. Here were also the copper cap machines, supplied by boys with long bands of pure copper, which were drawn into the machine, and there cut into crosses by punches; they then fell into a die, which doubled them up into the well-known shape (it scarcely took a moment!), and the finished caps were dropping out more rapidly than you could count them. Boys

are again employed to fit them into a perforated metal tray, and this is handed over to a sedate-looking old workman, who has charge of the dangerous composition with which they are filled. How carefully he ladles a bare handful of this white powder into a little wooden bowl, placing himself inside a railed off space, which encloses his machine. Down goes the tray of empty caps beneath a silver-looking plate, perforated with small holes, under each of which lies a cap; a small wooden spade then spreads the composition on the topmost plate, filling up each orifice, and every surplus grain is most scrupulously returned to the bowl, which is locked up as

ARMSTRONG SHOT.

before. By means of a gentle screw, the tray of caps is now slowly lowered and removed to a neighbouring machine, where each cap is subjected to a pressure of 800 lbs. (one exploded during this operation, and startled me not a little); a coating of shell-lac gives the finishing touch, rendering them impervious to moisture. An accident once occurred at another of these cap-filling machines from some unexplained cause; as the workman was ladling up the surplus composition, it suddenly exploded, driving the fragments of his machine in every direction, and taking off, at the same time, three fingers of the unfortunate man's hand, besides burning him dreadfully in the face. No one else was

injured in the factory; but had not the rules for using so little of this dangerous ingredient been strictly carried out, many lives would have fallen a sacrifice.

Gladly leaving this heated atmosphere, we took the road to old Father Thames. He was as dirty as ever, despite the main drainage, and a seething mass ran past us on its way to the sea. The riverside presented a busy scene. Large cranes lined the whole length of the wharf wall, many of them busily engaged in loading and unloading the barges and small steamers which lay alongside. Near these cranes is a long iron-roofed shed, under whose protecting care lay a number of guns, warlike stores, &c.,

labelled for different parts of our extended empire. Gun-carriages for Portsmouth and Malta, tin cases for Gibraltar, shot and shell for New Zealand, old guns from Leith Fort, new ones for Hong Kong and Canada, and heaps of rusty shot and shell from Corfu and Zante.

At the back of this shed are millions of cannon balls, piled one above the other in pyramidal heaps, round shot for guns, larger ones still for mortars and the more impudent looking Armstrongs, ready for any emergency. Bob said they generally kept three million of these little things, in case they might be wanted in a hurry.

The round shot are brought down to the shore for exportation on a raised kind of railway, along which they are rolled by men placed at various intervals.

In the centre of the wharf is a long pier, shaped like the letter T, which reaches far into the river; the larger ships were lying here, having their stores brought to them by trucks running on a tramway. So convenient is this pier for landing and embarking from at all stages of the tide, that not only do the soldiers of the garrison make use of it, but Royalty itself often graces it with its presence.

We now turned off to the right, and stood facing an enormous mortar, certainly fifteen feet high; two large shells, evidently belonging to it, were lying at its base. Bob explained to me that this was one of the once famous mortars constructed by Mr. Mallet, which were to reduce Sebastopol to ashes in a few days; the shells, weighing 3000 lbs., and loaded with a charge of 400 lbs. of powder, were to fly for miles and to burst on falling like a small mine, carrying death and destruction in every direction. The drawings and

were laid before the committee for shook their it was altogether, and would ment, how-ir minds to they were a fired, they and these

large shells could not be made to go as far as a common mortar. These experiments must have cost the nation some 20,000l., and the mortars themselves never left Woolwich. Close to this useless giant were some curious guns captured in the late Chinese war: they were lined inside with wrought iron tubes—'Just what we are doing now to our old guns,' said Bob, 'to try and make them strong enough to bear rifling.' Their wheel tires were studded with large-headed nails, which made one think how painful it would be to be run over by them!

More of poor John Chinaman's spoils were scattered around us. Large bronze guns, covered with tea-chest-looking inscriptions, and embellished with drawings of butterflies, stags, and storks. Wonderful people!

A few yards further were two Russian guns upon their iron carriages, just as they were found in the Redan on that memorable morning: no wonder the poor things were left behind! They were almost battered to pieces by our shot, which had cut great grooves in them, and even entered their very mouths.

A solemn shade passed over Bob's countenance, and sad memories of a bygone day were roused by the sight of these now silent foes. I knew he had borne his part on that fatal morning which brought sorrow and grief to many a fond heart at home, and had been present when so many of his former comrades were laid side by side beneath the earthworks of that great Redan.

We now entered a large building close by—the harness store—filled with piles upon piles of horses' shoes, saddles, gun and cavalry harness, and such like; the roof was garnished with pendant curb chains looking like a steel graper, and everything was order and neatness personified. Here were 20,000 sets of artillery harness, and any number of cavalry saddles and bridles. How many large rooms we passed through, all full to the ceiling, I don't know, but they seemed endless. Astonished at these vast supplies, I asked Bob if we had any other arsenal.

'This is truly the only one,' said he, 'for the Portsmouth Arsenal is but an insignificant affair, and, would you believe it? though the country is now so busily engaged fortifying all the dockyards, this most important place is left all but defenceless; there is nothing whatever to prevent the enemy coming up the river Thames with their small steel-plated steamers and firing Woolwich, and then we should be in a pretty mess. There would not be time to move one-fiftieth of the stores now accumulated here, and all the valuable machinery and workshops would fall a prey to the flames. There are certainly fortifications at Sheerness, but the ships need not go near them; the Thames is wide enough

to let small steamers pass on the other side, and the batteries at Gravesend and Tilbury are not worth much, while there are none whatever at Woolwich.'

We found in one of these stores a very curious gun in the shape of a fish; it had formerly belonged to the late King of Delhi, was captured when that place fell during the Indian mutiny, and afterwards placed in the Arsenal by the late Lord Canning. It certainly seemed more ornamental than useful.

Close by were wooden mules with little guns strapped upon their backs, angry-looking varminths! they are light and handy little things though, and capable of much mischief.

A CORKER MORTAR.

Other mules were provided with ambulances for carrying the sick and wounded, consisting of a kind of pannier on each side of the animal, or else mere stretchers, which doubled up and formed a sort of arm-chair. Bob told me these were not so much used in the Crimea as waggons with trays, upon which the poor fellows were laid, and pulled in and out like drawers; they were more comfortable for the worst cases than those on the backs of animals, which, from the perpetual jolting, shake the sufferer most painfully.

Other dummy mules were carrying miniature forges, others boxes of horse-shoes; in fact, everything that would be required for mountain warfare.

On leaving these immense stores, we wended our way once more along the river wall, and on reaching the end, my guide remarked that we were approaching the cemetery,

where were deposited the remains of those who had been destroyed by accident.

Wondering why the poor fellows had not been decently interred in the churchyard, I inquired whether the ground was consecrated? He laughed most heartily, saying, 'Oh, dear, no! it's the *guns* I'm talking about.' Sure enough, they were all laid out in regular rows, their broken limbs reverently placed together; and it was curious to notice how they had nearly all burst in the same way. One piece of the gun flies forward, another backwards, and the sides separate laterally. Some of these accidents had been fatal to the gunners employed: but, as the Armstrong gun does not burst, but only opens out at the joinings, it is hoped these calamities will cease. Many of these old guns, however, had been burst on purpose for experiment.

Close upon the cemetery I saw

six huge breech-loading guns; the great round breech was made to slide back, and then, the charge being inserted, it was closed up again. 'These are Yankee swindles,' said Bob; 'for in the time of the Crimean war, a cute Yankee came over with a small model of a breech-loading gun which was to do wonders; our Government, anxious to get hold of anything that would floor Sebastopol, bought the patent, and ordered six guns from the inventor. They were to throw a shot ten inches in diameter, and the Yankee was to have so much per lb. weight for them; but the specification was not carefully enough worded; our people expected them to weigh about three tons, so you may fancy their astonishment when these monsters arrived at Woolwich, weighing some 17 tons each. Of course they could not be moved, much less used, and there they are just as they left the ship! I wonder our people did not try to resell them to the Yankees when their little war broke out.

We continued our route, and arrived at the gun-field. Thirty thousand smooth-bores were lying in long rows upon railway iron: considering how many of them must now be useless, it is no wonder that many of the bases of the lamp-posts in Woolwich are nothing but old guns.

Workmen were putting new touch-holes into some, and examining the insides of others to see whether they were fit for use. In a corner rested some ancient relics of the deep—old iron guns which had been fished up some time back from the briny. They belonged when new to the 'Mary Rose,' lost in the days of the eighth Harry. They seemed mere pigmies to the giants by which they were surrounded; and the thought struck me that even these very monsters, at some future day, might be mere play-things as compared to later inventions.

My attention was now directed to a range of workshops, in which such a clatter of banging and thumping was going on, accompanied by clouds of smoke and steam, that I did not like to venture in. These

were the head-quarters of the great Armstrong, whose name, not long ago known scarcely beyond Newcastle, has now become a household word to many nations. Bob surprised me by saying that so great was the secret of this invention when it was first brought out, that even the gallant artillery general who then commanded at Woolwich was not allowed to witness the process of manufacture. He and his staff were one day actually seen waiting outside this very workshop, while some foreign princes who happened to be provided with a special order from our Government, were admitted and had everything explained to them. But the whole thing is well known to everybody now. It is supposed that other nations do not manufacture them, either because they think they have a better gun of their own, or that they have not the machinery or mechanics to make them.

Outside the factory, men were busy unloading waggons filled with bars of tough-looking iron, about 12 feet long and 2 inches broad; inside, these bars were joined together by welding, then placed in an oven till red hot, and afterwards drawn out and wound like a rope round an iron drum, thus forming a coil of metal. A little further, we saw this coil in its second stage; it had been again heated in a furnace, and the Nasmyth hammer was now forcing the iron into one mass, till it became a cylinder of unbroken metal; two of these cylinders were then hammered together, and so on till the rough gun was complete.

I must not, however, omit to mention one of the centre coils, to which were attached the arms or trunnions which support the gun upon its carriage. The hammering of this mass was conducted in another foundry; and when we arrived it had already been well beaten, and was just about to issue once more from its furnace for another welding. A long iron bar, as a handle, was fastened to it; and on opening the furnace-door, there it lay, so white with heat, we could scarcely look at it. Twenty men now seized the bar, a crane was

set to work, and the glowing metal emerging from its den, was carefully laid down upon its iron bed, under the most ponderous hammer I had ever seen; it came down with a crash that made the ground tremble under our feet, and is so powerful that it is capable of striking a blow of 200 tons, notwithstanding which it can be managed with such delicacy as to crack a nut without bruising the kernel.

It is said that 1000 tons of different material were laid down to form a foundation for the bed, but the soil being marshy, the tremulous motion is felt at a great distance.

At the first blow we were covered with sparks, which, however, became fewer as the metal cooled; the heat found a refuge in the twenty workmen. Poor fellows! how they perspired, and how exhausted they were when, after a good hammering, our friend was returned to his den for another heating.

Half cooked and half stunned, I followed Bob through many other factories where these guns were being turned, and rifled, and drilled: I do not, however, remember much about them, except that I brought away with me a beautiful long curl, which had been culled, not from the locks of the chief engineer, but from the pate of a brawny Armstrong who was being Bantingized down to his proper size by a steel chisel, which stuck to the helpless creature like a leech, and from which there was no escape.

How pretty the baby Armstrongs were as I saw them, spick and span in the finishing-room, where men with delicate hands and accurate vision were giving them the last touches prior to their being removed to the proving butt.

The large ones are tested by firing off a bar of iron weighing 1000 lbs., and if they stand the test of such an explosion ten times without injury, they are considered fit for use.

We now turned our backs on guns and our faces towards shot and shell. Small waggons filled with old iron, lumps of chalk, &c., were being emptied into a furnace, and a grunt of delight, accompanied

by yellow-bluish flames issuing from its mouth, told us how these delicacies had been appreciated.

On the other side of this furnace a man crept up, and with a long iron rod removed the clay stopper, and out poured the molten metal, like fiery soup, into an iron caldron, which was wheeled off when full and replaced by another. From these the moulds were filled, and after a short interval for cooling, they were taken outside, where pale-faced men with bare arms and flannel gloves removed the rivets and tossed out the red-hot shot into the sand to cool. These men had numerous scars upon their arms, and said it was too hot and weakening to protect them by wearing flannel sleeves; but not long ago an officer had recommended them to use whitening for their burns, and it had succeeded so well that they now kept a boxful always ready for use, and plastered it over the wound directly after the accident.

As we passed out of this factory we admired the beautiful metal gates, and then, wending our way through immense piles of timber, we reached the sawing-mills. As we approached, the noise was deafening, and a steel wheel, covered with sharp teeth, and revolving at a marvellous rate, rose from some underground habitation, and made its way towards a goodly oak lying on the ground; quickly it passed through it, cutting it in two parts in as many minutes. The severed block was then laid upon a moveable frame, which conveyed it under seven or eight upright saws, and these, when set to work, very soon disposed of the noble stem, dividing it into eight or nine stout planks. Alas! there was no one to cry 'Woodman, spare that tree.'

Close by is the wheel-factory, where the different parts of the wheels are cut out by machinery and then pressed together.

In the adjoining yard we found a Turkish tombstone, with its curious characters written in gold upon a slab of granite, the top of which had been shaped into a fez and coloured scarlet. Bob told me how the poor Turks lost their tomb-

stones, principally during the night, in the Crimean war time, and many of them may now be seen erected as trophies in English gardens.

By this time I was getting very tired, and declared that I must give in; but Bob would not hear of my going away without seeing the carriage factory, which we had not yet visited. Here were all kinds of carriages in different stages of manufacture—carriages for guns and pontoons, waggon for bread, waggon for wounded, waggon for stores,

carts for shot and shell, &c. &c. My eye was attracted by two old-fashioned looking little guns, which bore this inscription: 'These guns and carriages were made in the Royal Arsenal, 1782, and were presented by King George III. in 1792 to the Emperor of China, and delivered to him by the Ambassador Lord Macartney. They were afterwards captured in the Emperor's Palace in Peking in 1860, and returned to the Royal Arsenal after an absence in a tropical climate of 69 years, per-



GUN-BOAT MORTAR.

fectly sound and good in every respect.' Thus giving no mean testimony to the durability of the work turned out in these Government establishments.

We took a look also at the large model-room belonging to this department, where there was a model (real size) of a ship-mortar, the same kind as those which burst so dreadfully at the bombardment of Sweaborg. There was also a block of elm which had been sawn in two, and in the centre was a cavity con-

taining a bird's nest with two eggs in it, one a tomtit's, the other a sparrow's: they must have been there nearly a hundred years, judging by the age of the tree.

I paused for a moment to ask what was the cost of these vast establishments. Bob did not know the cost of the Arsenal alone, but the estimates last year for manufacturing departments and materials at home and abroad came to about a million and a half. It was more the year before, but some thousand

workmen had been dismissed, thus enabling the Government to reduce our income tax a penny in the pound, while, on the other hand, many families of those poor artisans had been subjected to dreadful privations before they could find work elsewhere. These men are only entitled to pension after ten years' service, when they may obtain 1-60th of their wages, and after twenty years 1-6th, and so on. In a case of accidental death, the family would receive a bonus from the War Office according to rank.

It was now time for us to take our departure. We passed by the small hospital where cases of accidents are received and attended to, and on reaching the main gates we stopped to examine the beautiful Maltese gun standing there as if to defend the entrance. It was captured at Malta, and is nearly twenty feet in length. On the gun itself is engraved the archangel St. Michael spearing Satan, who is falling backwards; and on the carriage, St. Paul shaking off the venomous serpent into the flames. The inscription stated that the gun was made by the Knights of Malta in the year 1607.

At this moment the clock struck

six. We had actually been four hours going round.

Once more the great bell rang; again hundreds issued from every quarter and poured in an enormous stream through the gates.

A row of policemen formed across the outlet, allowing the crowd of men and boys to filter through them, and tapping such of them on the shoulder as they thought looked suspiciously bulky or had large coats or bundles. The selected one at once diverged from the stream, and entered a side-door, where he was searched by the police to see if he had anything belonging to Government in his possession. Strict as this search is, the pilfering is very considerable. It is easy enough for a man to place a few copper nails in his hair, and if he did this every time he left his work, the Government would have lost no small sum of money at the end of the year.

Right glad was I to find myself once more seated in the train. The indefatigable Bob was as fresh as ever! He told me that, although I had visited but a part of that vast establishment, yet I should still carry away with me a pretty good idea of the whole—and I thought so too.

SOCIETY IN SEPTEMBER.

OH blest by the multitude toiling for gain,
 Oh blest by the Poultry and Chancery Lane,
 Oh hoped for and planned for the rest of the year,
 Who does not rejoice that September is here?

Full sweetly the tender leaves open in May,
 Right softly the linnet announces the day;
 And, fresh as the fancies of maidenly mind,
 All Nature is lovely and peaceful and kind.

But lost are the tender leaves opening in May
 For those who are kept in their office all day;
 And vainly the linnet doth pipe from the thorn
 For men who have business with Chaplin and Horne.

Then June it is gorgeous, July is divine,
 And August is often quite gloriously fine.
 Alas! it is one of the saddest of sells,
 The months above mentioned were made for the swells!

Then welcome September! What, wanting thy larks,
 Pray what would become of solicitors' clerks?
 Or, tell me, of happiness what would the sum be
 Enjoyed by the foreman of Hoby and Humby?

There are, who surrounded by *bulls* and by *bears*,
 Long to wind up a salmon instead of affairs;
 Who, life all embittered by *canards* and *rooks*,
 Wish salmon and brokers were on their own hooks!

Some, weary with books, and yet longing to read,
 (They surely want neither the *will* nor the *deed*),
 With *London Society*, *Baker*, and *Holt*,
 Feel really the strongest temptation to bolt.

Others, tied to a desk with very short tether,
 Think daily of heath, and dream nightly of heather;
 Or, raising the muzzle in Norfolk again,
 'Hollo!' shouts the keeper, 'a hen, sir, a hen!'

With six olive boughs in a state of dependence,
 'Twere vain to imagine 'No charge for attendance';
 Your shopkeeper married's no wonderful roamer,
 And seldom gets very much further than Cromer.

The artist of Newman Street—fourth is his story—
 Who longs to be sure that '*anch'io pittore*,'
 Finds just at this time that his customers ain't on,
 And gladly escapes with his brushes to Paignton.

One class I've omitted to notice above—
 The sort of young gentleman always in love,
 Who late for Brunhilda in misery sighing,
 And past every want but a corner for dying,

Said, 'Nothing from memory ere can erase ye,
 Life's hateful. Oh, rather I'd claim *eu-than-asia*!'
 At Ilfracombe meeting sweet Emily Keighton,
 You'll hardly believe it—they're married at Brighton!

You see that our month to the weary brings rest,
 And surely that month of all months is the best.
 Then, readers, one toast at your banquets remember,
 And toss off a glass to the month of September!

A. G. D.

LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER, 1866.

AN ENGLISH OCTOBER.



I AM not going to write about the astronomy, the botany, or the natural history of October: I have seen these in all the journals I can remember, and I never read them.

VOL. X.—NO. LVIII.

They used all to begin with a sort of lecture on the earth, and then went on with phenomena, month by month; or, later, they became monthly Galens or Watertons, and

as they were often dying and being succeeded by other publications, they became a sort of repeated lectures *da capo*. They all had quotations from the poets, and were dotted with *Stubbsia* or some such words in italics, and were all rather long.

Nor am I going to write about the dullness of London, or about hunting or brewing. London is never dull to me, I don't hunt, and my interest in brewing is confined to its results. But I have a great liking for October. I like the grave and yet cheerful, bountiful, and hearty old month. He has his faults—what month has not?—but I maintain they are few, and, taking him as he should be, unsophisticated by a bad season, for his mornings and evenings, his air and his sunshine, his sobriety and good-humour, commend me to an English October. May, with all her airs, is a pert minx, and often proves a jilt withal. Spring, generally, is all very well, if you stick to your flannels, remember your umbrella, and listen to the birds for an hour or two. In fact, spring trades on the birds. It is a Jenkinson, and the birds are its standing quotation. Summer has its good points—its long days, green foliage, Royal Academy, and so on, and we may add that it points onward to October. But it is also the time for baking pavements, boiling churches, dusty roads, and empty brooks. And with our present habits we are most of us in the full swing of work. Hot with talk and thought, we flow down Chancery Lane, along Whitehall, or through lanes capped by a belt of blue burning steel, a tide of human lava, and call it 'genial.' We describe it as Nature's holiday, because, I suppose, like deputations and such people, one works more than ordinary. Harvest comes; she gathers in her stores, makes her preserves, has a wet season by way of a thorough cleaning up, and then, clean and tidy, calm in mind and body, bright but not hot, cool but not chilled, takes her holiday in October.

Come out, my friend, before breakfast if you like, so it be not too long. We can even see the sun rise if we like, without shaking up before we

are well shaken down. Never mind the road, we can get over the fields now. The slight haze, without a gloomy presage of heat or a touch of shivering dampness about it, improves the picture. The hint of winter is of the gentlest, and only sufficient to enable you to give it a less morose welcome when it comes. The brooks are full and merry. The trees—all *à-la-mode* before, as became 'the season'—assert their individuality, decline to dress all in green, and enrich themselves and the scene with a hundred hues. Heirs of the departed flowers, they wear their tints with new grace, and employ their inherited riches with lavish and skilful hands. The air is pure, fresh, soothing, inspiriting. It does not 'stir the Viking's blood,' perhaps, nor need that element within us always be stirring. But neither does it dry it up. You may drink it—it is not brandy and water nor iced water. You may bathe in it—it is not Turkish, or shower, or tepid, but *sui generis*. It is the most pleasant of 'vehicles' through which Nature 'exhibits' her gaseous medicines; the most elastic, and pliant, and helpful medium in which to walk. It does not resist you and push you back, nor draw you forward by a languid suction. You, my dear sir, who conscientiously walked in August, for a constitutional, or to make a call, or affected delight in the steaming garden and its hissing bees, now walk because you like it. Your third mile, betrayed by your second, turns betrayer to the fourth, and so on, till your moral volition and sense of justice as regards railway dividends interposes to stop the series. Walking—yes, walking is the word—not scrambling, ploughing, or shuffling; for walking, I take it, implies freedom of action, liberty to be fast or slow. It is not walking, I take it, if you have to run to keep warm, or if you have to mince and loiter to keep cool. I understand by it a steady, easy, unembarrassed moving along, unscorched, undusted, and undrilled, now brisk and firm, with a sense of power, now measured and meditative—these varieties, with power to add to their number, in

the way of a leap with a male friend, or a hand-in-hand run with a female one, and so on, if you like. And this you can only do in October. Be so good as to remember that I mean all through October as a type. October may not always be 'itself,' and you may get what I call October days in March, or August, or December. But October is the type, and I say it's the time for walking.

And then the light! What an honest, mellow, wise, picturesque light it is! It has in it the result of various experiments in light. It is the proverb of lights—its concentrated wisdom. The art of giving a full, round sun, without defying your gaze and punishing you; clouds which are not crape or wadding; a rich, carefully-coloured sky, under which, nevertheless, you can see, and not wink or squint at the objects around; a haze which is not steam or fog, a glow which is not glare, a toning which is not obscurity, strength which is not coarse, and softness which is not feeble, is not to be acquired in a day, and therefore the other months are not to be blamed for what they cannot help. Neither are the foreign schools of landscape-painting, which are giving way before the English. If they have not an English October, how can they paint as if they had? October makes one charitable even towards foreign schools, towards perils past, hot weather, and immaturity, inexperienced months. It is a mantle in which you take well-balanced, rounded, stereoscopic views of things. If I were a Quaker I should prefer to meet Baron Bramwell in October.

People say London is 'empty' in October. Now an 'empty' London has its charms. Once in a way Rotten Row, Regent Street, the Drawing Rooms, *et hoc genus omne*, are pleasant stimulants, and one sees and enjoys and learns a great deal in connection therewith. But those for whom they are a definition of London do not know what London is. The eloquence of London is sometimes greatest when it is unadorned—when it speaks with an average, level tone, relieved for a

time of its richer tropes and figures; when it wears the quiet grandeur of its 'ferial days,' as the ritualists would call them, the lone Londoner likes to feel how much London can do without. Kensington Gardens seem more like his baronial property; the classic quarters of the town more classic; the Temple suggests dignity and leisure. We can remember the knights better than when the lane is thronged by bags of 'refreshers.' Wolsey *might* have been shampooed at Honey and Skelton's; the voice of Johnson and Goldsmith can be more than 'part heard'; a hundred black doors inscribed 'Attendance from 10 to 1' (i.e. from ten minutes to one) are eloquent of 'the long.' And then on Sundays you anticipate posterity, and hear, in a curatic state, all the future bishops and deans.

The pleasures of October do not disappear with daylight. The October evening is one of its best features. Having had in the day all the best of what summer has to give, you have at night the best of winter's qualities—his evening at home. You can have a fire if you like, and if you do not you need not. Coming home in the early October evening is one of the pleasantest of human things. In the country you see the sunset as you come; and as it gently melts into what is night in the better meanings only of the word, the sense that you need not keep on working because it still seems day, and that you need not go to bed, since, after all, it is not night, is very delightful. The moon rises, and you do not shrink from her gaze as though you ought to be asleep; she seems to rise in a quiet, domestic manner, as though Nature, having got the children to bed, had lit her moderator and sat down to her tatting. And in town, as you draw towards home, and the lamps light one by one, a pleasant home feeling settles upon you, a feeling as of a general condition of parlour, a general drawing of curtains and lighting of lamps, a sense of tea and toast, an appreciative perception of the fitness of things.

Then, too, is the season for that

pleasant interval known in feminine language as 'between the lights.' Then, and not in winter, where Cowper puts it,

'has fancy, ludicrous and wild,
Soothed with awaking dream of houses, towers,
Trees, churches, and strange visages, expressed
In the red cinders, while with poring eyes
We gazed, ourselves creating what we saw.'

Not in winter, for then it comes too early for tea to follow or precede, and tea, not work, is the thing just after the 'parlour twilight.' The quiet talk with the fire and the shadows does us good. They talk with us of Octobers gone and Octobers coming, and amongst others of the October of our days, the season which, if it follow a working spring and an honest, busy summer, may be as calm and as pleasant as any part of our days. You and I, my good friend, who are toiling in June

or July, may even be reconciled to the toning down which is to come by the thought of our October, with its promise of garnered deeds, enriched landscapes, soft lights, and tea time. A day's work done, and yet a capacity for an evening's work to come, if need be; the leaves of life old enough to be golden, but not old enough to fall; with the nerve and freshness which so often come as in the October days, when the premature weariness and worn-outness of the laborious summer have gone—it must be a pleasant experience. Some human Octobers indeed are sadder—wet with tears, despoiled of treasures, chill with early winter; but many are of the truer type. So may ours be, my friend. Let us sit and think together, gravely but not gloomily, and let us interpret the forms we find in the fire into images of hope.

CHARLIE CAREW.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'DENIS DONNE,' 'ON GUARD,' 'WALTER GORING,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DI'S ENGAGEMENT.

THE curtain rises on an excessively comfortable scene—the dining-room of a house that ranks midway between farm homestead and country mansion, and that consequently, after the manner of such houses, combines the comforts of the one with many of the luxuries of the other.

At the head of the table an elderly lady is seated. She is engaged in carving a chicken, and pressing a 'bit of the breast, or a wing, say,' simultaneously upon every other member of the company; which consists, firstly, of her eldest daughter—to give due precedence to the ladies—Miss Prescott, known as 'Di' to her intimates, by reason of her god-parents; having, in a thoughtless hour, elected to name her 'Dinah.' The supper which graces the table is in celebration

of the return of this young lady from a six-weeks' sojourn in the great metropolis.

While Di is appeasing her hunger, and before I pass on to her sister and brothers, I will describe her to you. The moment of assuaging the appetite has been declared by divers great authorities (Byron amongst the number) to be an unfortunate one as far as a woman's appearance goes. If this be a fact, it certainly is an unfortunate one; for in these latter days we are not ethereal creatures that can live upon air, and love, and the like intangibilities; we must eat, and eat frequently; and if we are unprepossessing while doing so, woe be to us.

If we are unprepossessing: but I utterly deny the implication. In defiance, therefore, of poetical prejudice, I will select this unpropitious

period for painting Di Prescott's portrait.

A pretty, small, compact figure, rounded and plump; showing plenty of 'breeding' (though she was only a tenant-farmer's daughter!) in her slim wrists and ankles—plenty of breeding, and not a bit of bone; showing breeding, also, in the way her small, classical head was poised on her shoulders; showing it, more than all else, in the frank stand she took in being what she was, and nothing more.

I have called hers a 'classical' head; and this it was, and the features corresponded with it thoroughly. But it was not of the severe, cold, statuesque classical order. It was perfectly pure in form; but it was alive with colour, warmth, and expression; and so an improvement, to my mind, on the chill marble beauties from whom we gain our notion of what constitutes classical beauty.

Properly speaking, she could not be called either blonde or brunette. She had a fair, sanguine, rose-leaf complexion, soft dark hair, and hazel eyes. A charming face altogether; one that was always laughing, and blushing, and dimpling all over; a face, for all this, that could, when occasion called for it, express much determination.

During this before-mentioned six weeks' metropolitan sojourn of hers, she had achieved a good portion of woman's destiny; that is to say, she had fallen in love, and been fallen in love with, and she had become engaged.

In the highly respectable suburban quarter in which she had been staying, Mr. Carew had been a man of mark. Mammās spoke of him as a man to be asked to dinner, instead of simply suffering him to drift into their drawing-rooms with the herd of an evening; and daughters repeated his sayings to one another, as they unrobed in their dressing-rooms at night—repeated them verbosely, with the strong, though unexpressed hope of damping one another's views respecting him entirely.

That highly-respectable suburban quarter had vowed never again to

put its trust in man, when, after a brief acquaintance with her, Mr. Carew proposed to the country girl, Di Prescott. It made croquet parties in the square garden not so pleasant to Di as they had been formerly; and it found many a flaw in Mr. Carew's habits, and prospects, and position, and forthwith pointed them out to the interloper.

When these things came to pass, Di caused herself to be peremptorily summoned home; and when she told her lover of this summons, she added, somewhat hesitatingly, 'And they say I'm to tell you that they will be happy to see you, whenever you can come down, Charlie: you *will* come, won't you?'

'Of course I will, as soon as I can get leave,' he replied. 'Let me see, this is July; well, I will be down in September, I dare say, that is, I can get away then.' And then he went on to lament his hard fate in not being able 'to get away,' and altogether caused Di to regard him as one of her Majesty's hardest-worked and most valuable servants—which fond belief is, I imagine, entertained by the relatives and female friends of each individual member of that mighty establishment to which Mr. Carew belonged—Somerset House.

But I am digressing, as old novelists were in the habit of observing when they had hopelessly lost the thread of their stories, and had no well-founded belief that they might ever be permitted to pick it up again; to return to the supper-table.

Opposite to Mrs. Prescott, her eldest son, the master of the house, is seated. A fine, bluff, manly-looking fellow; gentle-natured and soft-hearted enough, but rough-mannered, as it is the habit of entirely country-bred men to be. A man who had cultivated out-door sports, to the exclusion of most other things, and who on that account was wont to look shily upon, and to regard as effeminate or 'muffs' those men with whom the field, the chase, and the gun were not paramount.

Next to Di, the new arrival, and naturally the heroine of the occasion,

is Ellen, the second sister, whose appetite is not what it is wont to be, by reason of her intense anxiety to hear about the last fashions and the last play, to say nothing of Mr. Carew; and opposite to her is Willie, aged eighteen, spoken of by adoring friends as 'at such an awkward age, you know,' and by those who were not adoring, as 'the cub.'

Despite Di being the darling of the family, and the heroine of this special occasion, the conversation, when I begin to report it, had taken a turn that was not most pleasing to her.

'So you came all the way from London by yourself, my dear,' Mrs. Prescott remarked (she had made the same observation precisely two minutes and a half before).

'Scarcely by myself, ma; the train was full,' Di replied, laughing.

'Well, but you may call it by yourself.'

'I don't see why I should call it anything of the kind.'

'I do wonder, that I do, that Mr. Carew shouldn't have wished to come with you.'

'He had something better to do, I suppose,' Henry Prescott, the elder brother, struck in gruffly. He loved his sister Di most dearly; but this engagement of hers with a London man seemed to him a flagrant disregard of the country blessings that were around her.

'He hadn't anything better to do, but he couldn't get away,' Di replied, good-humouredly.

Here the cub saw his opportunity, and seized it. Di was dear to him too, very dear; but he had gathered his ideas of fine London gentlemen from sundry loud rowdy specimens of the bagman genus, whom he met sometimes at the bar of the inn in the adjoining market-town. So now, when Di said he couldn't get away, the cub grinned and said—

'Oh, aint he his own master, then.'

'Yes, he is; that is, in most things; but he's a Government clerk, you know, Henry,' she replied, ignoring the younger brother, and turning to the elder.

'In the Customs?' Henry interro-

gated. His ideas on the subject were limited; the inestimable privilege of being free of the mysteries of Somerset House was not his: he never read Mr. Trollope's delightful novels.

'Customs! good gracious! no, Harry,' Di answered, impatiently: 'the Admiralty, of course; and he expects to be passed on to Pall Mall soon.'

The magnificence of this expectation was entirely lost upon Mr. Henry Prescott; to him Somerset House and Pall Mall were of the same worth.

'But tell us what he is like, Di; never mind the boys,' Ellen cried, impatiently.

'He's considered remarkably handsome: perhaps I shouldn't quite call him that myself; but he is very good-looking,' Di replied, with a grand air of impartiality.

'I hate to hear a fellow called handsome,' Henry Prescott said. 'Now there's Markham—Markham is as fine a fellow as any one could care to see; but I shouldn't call him handsome.'

This he said with the nearest approach to a sneer that he could achieve.

'No more should I; no more would any one call Markham handsome,' Ellen retorted. Ellen was a warm partisan of Di's; and Di had won wrath to herself from the other members of her family by ignoring Jack Markham's claims on her regard.

'Don't be pert, Miss Nellie; no one cares what you would call him: you aint asked to call him anything,' Willie said, abruptly. The family were apt to take sides in this way; to take sides, and stand to their guns gallantly; but they never quarrelled.

'You're only a boy,' Nellie said, nodding her head at him. 'You're only a boy; you mustn't give an opinion.'

'I'm a year older than you, any way; so if I'm only a boy, you are only a little girl.'

'Ah, but we mature earlier, don't we, ma?' Nellie replied, consequentially.

'I believe I have a photograph of

Charlie's somewhere,' Di here remarked. She was beginning to fear that the conversation was about to drift away altogether from the subject most interesting to her at present—her lover and his looks.

'Oh! do find it, Di.' Nellie, at all events, was heartily anxious to behold him.

Di searched and found not one photograph but a dozen, in divers attitudes. Caldesi, Silvy, Windlow, Hering, and many more, had all been employed at various periods in reproducing the manifold beauties of Mr. Charles Carew.

The photographs showed them a tall slight man with a close-cropped head, leaning against Ionic columns, balconies, tables, old oak chairs, against all the 'properties,' indeed, against which men do lean when they are being photographed.

Di waited patiently for opinions to be formed and offered. Nellie was the first to speak.

'How nice and tall, and what *delicious* whiskers and moustache.'

Di could resist no longer.

'Yes, but you lose half his good looks *really* in a photograph; for he's very fair, with golden, no, not golden but tawny, hair and blue eyes, and that's all lost in a photograph.'

'Don't you call Rock tawny sometimes?' Willie asked, mentioning an Irish setter.

'Yes,' Di replied, carelessly.

'Well, we call him red,' Willie answered, laughing.

'Oh! you horrid boy,' Nellie said, energetically. 'Tawny isn't red, it's fair; and fair men are the most fashionable.'

'Handsome is that handsome does,' Mrs. Prescott remarked, cheerfully. The remark was irrelevant to those which had gone before, but that was nothing, it was so kindly meant.

'I declare I won't say another word about him till he comes down, and then you'll see for yourselves that your Jack Markham can't hold a candle to him,' Di said, half pouting.

'He'll find his time heavy on his hands, won't he?' Henry Prescott interrogated. 'I suppose he doesn't care much for riding?'

'Very likely he'll learn on the old grey pony,' Willie suggested.

'Very likely he will if you'll learn manners,' Nellie cried; and then the mother moved that as it was late and Di was tired the present meeting should be dissolved.

When the day came for Charlie Carew to make his advent amongst them, Miss Prescott was nearly beside herself with nervous anxiety. There had been very little more said either about her engagement or the man to whom she was engaged since that first night of her return. But though silence had been maintained she felt that her brothers were antagonistic to the plan she had formed and the one with whom she had formed it. Mutely but strongly had Henry Prescott favoured the Jack Markham alliance, and now, though mutely, with equal earnestness was he set against the Charlie Carew one. In her anger against him for this most unjust prejudice Di called her brother 'narrow-minded and ignorant. They think because he's not a fox-hunter by profession that he must be a milk-sop, but I'll not say a word till he comes, and they find out for themselves that he isn't.'

In a weak hour Di proposed to her mother that their dinner hour should be altered during Mr. Carew's stay. For years, save on the occasion of regular set parties, they had dined at one at the White House, and the proposal to rush from one to six came upon Mrs. Prescott like a shower-bath. She was a woman to shrink from innovation, but not to oppose it; so now when Di said—

'Oh, ma, can't we dine at six while Charlie is here? It can't make any difference to the boys, you know, and it will give us such much better days: if we dine at one, the whole day is broken up.'

'Don't you think we might make it four, Di? Four would be very convenient.'

'Four would be horrid: four is not to be thought of for an instant,' Di said, firmly.

'Then five, let it be five.'

'Five is not a bit better than four, mamma. No, no; if it can't be six, which would be much nicer for us

all, as I have often thought, let it stay at one. Any way, one is a less unholy hour than four or five.'

'Well, it shall be six. I don't know what the boys will say,' Mrs. Prescott said, meekly.

'They can't say anything if they have their luncheon at one,' Di urged.

'Willie's always hungry; he'll be glad of the chance of making two dinners,' Nellie said, promptly.

'You shouldn't laugh at Willie, dear,' Mrs. Prescott observed, reprovingly. 'Your brother was speaking this morning before he went out, Di, about asking a few friends here the day after to-morrow to meet Mr. Carew.'

'Who will be asked?' Di said, reflectively.

'Jack Markham, I should hope,' Nellie cried; 'that would be rare fun. He always gnashes his teeth on his fork; he'd gnash them more than ever if he saw Di and Mr. Carew together.'

'We thought of Mr. and Mrs. Peyton, Mr. and Mrs. Wingfield, and Tom and Flora Price,' Mrs. Prescott replied, ignoring her youngest daughter's remark. 'With ourselves they would be a nice little party.'

'Ye-es,' Di replied, dubiously. She did not desire to hurt her mother's feelings, but if Mr. and Mrs. Peyton, Mr. and Mrs. Wingfield, and Tom and Flora Price constituted a 'nice' party in Mrs. Prescott's eyes, then her mother and herself had widely different ideas as to the proper application of the word, that was all.

The railway station at which Mr. Carew was to leave the train was some three miles and a half from the White House, and there had been some talk at the breakfast-table as to the manner in which he should perform the journey by road. 'Willie can fetch him in the trap with the bay mare, can't you, Willie?' Ellen had said; and Willie had replied, 'No, he couldn't,' very determinately, rather to Di's relief, she being dubious as to the effect her brother might produce on her lover without her saving presence.

'John can go if you like,' Henry

Prescott had said, turning to his sister Dinah. Now John was their sole serving man, and it occurred to Miss Prescott that perchance he would be needed at home that day.

'Well, Harry, as its fine I don't think John's time shall be taken up. I'll have Pet put in and drive over myself.'

'Oh, just as you like,' her brother replied: and so it was settled that Miss Prescott herself, and her bay pony Pet, should go over for the Somerset House clerk.

'If you have the car I can go with you, Di,' Ellen meanly suggested when Di was putting on a new hat and new gloves, and a marvellously fresh-looking muslin, in order to meet the expected guest becomingly.

'But I have ordered Pet into the gig,' Di replied, trying to seem indifferent about the going alone to meet him.

'There is such a thing as countermanding an order to a groom, Di; however, I'm resigned to be left behind.' And then the two sisters laughed, and the elder one blushed and said, 'You shall be with us so *much*, dear,' which was a word of such rare promise to Miss Nellie's fair young ear that she forbore to rush about and tell every one how 'Di *would* go alone,' and to ask if 'it wasn't a joke.'

It was a charming rural little station, the one at which the Admiralty hope, Mr. Charles Carew, alighted. A charming little station, that is, if you did not want a cab, or a porter, or a strong boy to carry your luggage, for none of these things were to be had at it. For all these being lacking, though, it was a charming little station, and so Charlie Carew thought when he got out and saw Di evidently waiting for him in the road below the platform, in a well-hung little gig, drawn by a handsome bay pony.

Di felt that that drive home would not be the least pleasant part of Charlie's visit; accordingly she made no great haste to get over the ground. They had a great deal to say to one another, by which I must not be understood to mean that they had more than the usual amount of

soft romance to talk, but they had each much to hear. Di wanted to be posted up in the doings of those friends with whom she had been staying when she brought Charlie down; their correspondence with her had not been by any means brisk since her return. She questioned Mr. Carew guardedly, she herself imagined, but, it must in honesty be owned, too soon after getting him into the pony-gig.

'Have I seen much of the Leslies lately? let me see. Oh, yes, I've seen them once or twice.'

'I *hope* they're well,' Di said, with much force.

'I believe they are, thank you.'

'Alice is very pretty, isn't she, Charlie, or is it you who don't admire her style?'

Charlie girded at this question in his heart. It seemed to him that Di wished him to understand that his opinions were no more to her than another fellow's.

'As it happens, I do admire her—immensely,' he replied, stiffly.

'Do you now?' Di said, somewhat dejectedly. 'I know many—that is, I know some gentlemen don't.'

'Then they have precious bad taste, that's all I can say; she looked surprisingly well the other day, at a croquet party; she was out-and-out the prettiest girl on the ground; such feet as she has! and they're booted in such a way!'

Di whipped Pet.

'But never mind the Leslies, Di, dear,' Charlie went on, with the magnificence of a conqueror, 'tell me about your people; what will they think of my coming down upon them in this way?'

'They will manage to stand the shock I have no doubt,' Di replied, drily. She was angry with Charlie for admiring Alice Leslie and Alice Leslie's feet, and consequently she was peculiarly alive to the claims of her own family. He really was slightly to blame; no man should praise a rival to a woman who has driven three miles and a half under a burning sun to meet him.

Charlie Carew had a most thorough and manly aversion to being snubbed; he had a far less aversion

to snubbing, unfortunately, but in that he is not singular.

'I have no doubt they will stand it for the time I shall submit them to it,' he said, coldly; and then Di threw off all semblance of annoyance with him, and cried—

'Oh, Charlie, you will stay all the time you can—won't you?'

'That depends on the way I am received,' he replied, steadily. And then poor Di felt that she had done an unwise thing in bringing this visit about, till Jack Markham's claims were finally and for ever set at rest.

For Charlie was evidently not a man to be coolly treated with impunity; and she knew that Henry was very much in the mind thus to treat any rival of his friend Jack Markham. All things local were in favour of Jack's suit to Miss Prescott, and it was with things local alone that Henry Prescott had to do, as he was wont to avow with frequency and pride. A pack of harriers would have been kept between the two men had Di only been wise, and they could assist one another in a thousand ways, as their farms were situated near together. Di could but remember how entirely her eldest brother's heart had been set on her marriage with Jack Markham, as she drove Mr. Carew home to the White House, and Mr. Carew proved to her that he was well prepared to stand upon his dignity.

As they drove up the sweep that led through the outer lawn, past the farm-buildings and up to the front of the house, Miss Prescott saw that the whole family had assembled themselves on the garden lawn.

'That was a happy thought—*Nell's* probably,' she said to herself; 'it will do away with half the stiffness of the introduction.' Then she said aloud hurriedly—'See, Charlie, they have all come out to meet you! Don't mind if my brothers are a little rough—don't mind for *my* sake!'

And she looked so beaming, bright, and beautiful as she asked it, that he promised her warmly and set her mind at rest.

He was a handsome young fellow this Charlie Carew; not so tall as he had appeared in his photographs, but slim, dapper, easy in movement, with a good-looking face, and a graceful carriage, and hair and whiskers of the fair hue that Di called 'tawny,' and Ellen 'fashionable.' He met his future mother, and brothers and sisters-in-law very pleasantly now—far more pleasantly and affably and openly than they met him; for he was so complete a realization of her ideal that Ellen was conscious of a certain agitation which she afterwards described to Di 'as being in a delicious tremble;' while Henry and Willie could but feel resentment obtaining in their souls against a man who was about to take something precious from them, and who yet evidently was not much distressed in the effort to win their good opinion.

'Now *do* be a dear boy, and don't look superior,' Di found time to whisper to Charlie as they crossed the lawn towards the family group. And the mighty monarch of her soul promised that he would not 'be superior,' or anything else that he ought not to be.

The first evening that Charlie Carew spent with the family of his betrothed may be counted as a success, inasmuch that it was not a decided failure.

'I can't say that either of your brothers are garrulously given, Di,' he said to her the following morning. 'Henry asked me if I smoked, and Willie if I rode; and when I had replied "a little," to both questions, they suffered their respective subjects to fall to the ground utterly.'

'Ah! they'll talk more when they know you better, dear,' she said, encouragingly. Then he laughed in his heart at the tone she assumed with reference to those whom he called 'her bucolic brothers.' In fact, Mr. Charlie Carew, the spoilt pet of a Bayswater coterie, was beginning to think that he had thrown himself away without sufficient cause. He remembered that Di had been very easily won, and he told himself that it was because she had seen nothing so brilliant as himself in all her former experience.

He was not ungenerous, but it did occur to him that it would be just as well to 'keep up' the profound impression he had made upon her pastoral mind.

But for all this resolve of his they spent a very happy day—that first one after his arrival at the White House.

CHAPTER II.

'THE OTHER DAY.'

It may as well be acknowledged at once that Charlie Carew was not an enthusiastic sportsman. He was quite capable of carrying a gun for several hours, and of bringing a few birds down with the same, in congenial society, or when he was alone. But he was incapable—he felt after ten minutes of it—of 'carrying on a conversation with the two Prescotts and bringing himself down to the level of Jack Markham, under the shallow pretence of sharing their sports.' In fact, it may as well also be acknowledged that the young Admiralty clerk was very much inclined to give himself scarcely 'airs' but 'zephyrs' of consequence.

Mr. Markham had come over to the Prescotts to breakfast on the day the events of which will be described in this chapter. It goes without saying that his former pretensions to her hand and affections had been lightly alluded to by Miss Di in more than one of her confidential conversations with the successful aspirant, and Charlie had consequently been rather curious to see this 'Jack' who, though rejected, was evidently the reverse of scorned by the young lady. But Mr. Carew came of a class that can keep its feelings well within bounds. 'Who's Jack Markham?' he asked, indifferently, when Di went out into the garden over the wet grass to meet him and call him in to breakfast, with the tidings 'that Jack Markham had come.'

'He has a bad memory for the other men who have cared for me,' the girl thought, almost angrily. But she forgave him when, on her explaining who Jack was, Mr. Carew put her hand on his arm and asked

her to 'come in and introduce him at once—Markham must be a good fellow to have fallen in love with her.'

Mr. Markham was a capital type of the men of good landed property who rank with, but after, the 'county gentlemen.' His estate was good, but it was small enough for him to farm the whole of it—he was not in the proud position of a landlord—he 'held' not his 'own' only but the whole of his own.

For a man who had known no other instruction than the best collegiate establishment his own county could boast of could give, Mr. Jack Markham was very fairly educated. Moreover, he had read a great deal since his schooldays, and so had educated himself. What he lacked was the knowledge the world alone can give men; and with the exception of sundry stray visits to London (paid chiefly when the cattle-show was on), and one brief, bewildering week in Paris, he knew nothing of the world.

But for all this lack of experience he was a man to whom the fairer portion of his own *coterie* inclined very kindly. He was handsome, well grown, well mannered, though not polished—a crack shot, a capital cricketer, a plucky rider, a free-hearted, open-handed, hospitable, honourable, generous fellow altogether—a man who was heartily well-liked by his own sex. His want of success with Miss Prescott was in nowise attributed to any shortcoming on his part by a single person who knew about it—and Jack spoke very freely of his failures. It was universally put down to a want of common sense in Di. People looked upon her as 'spoilt' by Jack's love; they believed that the time Mr. Markham had employed in wooing her had been so maddeningly flattering to her that her head had been turned to the point of rejecting him.

It was not in handsome, blue-eyed, chestnut-haired Jack to let his cheek grow pale with care because a woman undervalued him. He was very fond of Di still; but he knew himself to be quite equal to the trial of seeing her with her betrothed

without any undue signs of that fondness manifesting themselves. 'If anything should happen to break it off with the swell, I'll have another shot at Di,' he said to her brother Henry; 'but I am not going to make her uncomfortable by keeping away from your house while Carew is there.'

'Then come over to breakfast on Thursday,' Henry said; and he did not feel called upon to add that, to the best of his belief, Di would not be made unhappy by his absence or presence or anything about him.

Without being anything of a dandy, Mr. Jack Markham knew too well what he was about where women were concerned ever to appear before them in negligent attire. He did not contrast unfavourably with the Poole-clothed Mr. Carew, even Di was fain to confess when he stood up to be introduced to his successful rival. His brown ribbed velvet shooting suit was very quiet but very perfect. 'Fellow actually knows how to dress,' Mr. Carew thought, as he sat down opposite to Jack. 'He'd be good-looking, too, if he were well set up and had less pink in his cheeks,' which was an uncalled-for, not to say an unjust addenda; for Jack, though not well 'set up,' in the military sense, stood straight as an arrow, and had the full, free, unfettered swing of limb and gait which plenty of out-door exercise, in good boots and on good horses, is apt to give a man.

'Now go and make yourself more killing,' Nellie whispered to Mr. Carew, as he was passing her after breakfast to go and prepare himself for joining the shooting party, 'or Di will be turning to the "old love" again in that nice coat.' At which suggestion Di tossed her head, and Charlie smiled superciliously.

'Thanks for the hint, Nellie,' he said, good-temperedly; 'but though I'm not vain, I don't find the old love at all formidable.' Then he went up to dress, and the two girls strolled into the garden to wait and see the start.

Nellie was silent for a minute or two, busied, apparently, in selecting the best from a great bush of late-flowering white roses. The dinner-

party was to come off this evening, and it was the Miss Prescotts' pride that their table should always be well set off with flowers.

'What's the programme for to-day, Di?' Nellie asked abruptly at last. 'As Charlie will be out, you won't be able to sit and look soft nothings at each other all day, so I may have a chance of your society. Shall we go for a drive?'

'Yes,' Di replied, 'we'll go round and order Pet in now.'

'And drive into Coulston for some blue sarcenet ribbon without an edge; that's the only thing to wear round the throat now.'

'I don't see well how we're to manage Coulston to-day,' Di replied, reflectively.

'Oh, Di! only seven miles. What nonsense, when that lazy little wretch, Pet, has scarcely done any work lately.'

'It's not Pet I'm thinking of,' Miss Prescott replied, laughing. 'I promised that we would take them their luncheon at one.'

'Very well; I'll give up my blue ribbon. Did you promise Henry or Jack?'

'Neither; I told Charlie.'

'Does he really know so much of our country manners and customs as to know that we take food to mighty hunters?'

'Of course he does. Don't you take to laughing at him for not being a combination of Nimrod and centaur, Miss Nellie; he does not go in for that style of thing.'

'No; I know—competitive examinations, and silver-grey gloves, and a generally diffused air of sweet belief in all that's non-official being a little outside his interest. Now, Di, don't be savage. I like him very much. I'd fall in love with him, perhaps, and get him to break his engagement if it were any one but you going to marry him. But still he is a little proud, now isn't he?'

'How?'

'Well, wasn't he a little grand just now about Jack Markham, after Jack had been so jolly to him, too; it's ungrateful. And now look at him; he is being grand to mamma, at the door; I can see he is.'

'Well, don't you account for him

as well as myself,' Di said, in a vexed tone. 'Mamma is most likley telling him of the iniquitous practices of the dairymaid with regard to the cream. He'll take a frantic interest in the cream and the chickens when he knows more about them, very likely.'

Then the two girls went forward, as all the men assembled at the door, and told them that luncheon should be brought to them at one, on a wooded mound called the Fox Cover, that bulged out of one side of a turnip field.

'That's something to look forward to,' Charlie whispered to Di. 'They'll find me so utterly ignorant of all their intensely interesting topics, that I shall be condemned to silence till you come.'

'Then it will be your own fault,' Di said, sadly. Then she waxed a little cross as the recollection of what Nellie had been saying respecting Charlie's 'grandness' swept over her mind, and she added—

'I suppose you would be more at home, and better able to follow the interest, if you were in the square playing croquet, and looking at Alice Leslie's pretty feet.'

'With you in this vein, yes,' he replied; and so they parted.

Miss Prescott had plenty of time to recover her temper before one o'clock. She set about doing it very sensibly. First, she helped her sister to arrange the vases for the dinner-table; and the communion with flowers is sure to exorcise the worst demons that can possibly have possession of a girl like Di. Then she dressed herself carefully—'deliciously,' Nellie called it—putting on a dress that would not look crumpled when she got out of the little pony phaeton, and bringing out all the points of the same with a correctly contrasting belt (that showed off her *petite* figure well) and the narrowest and whitest of linen collars and cuffs.

'There's something too dogmatic about your hat, dear,' her sister said to her when she was ready at last. 'A little sailor's hat is all very well by the sea; but I have something sweet in black velvet Glengarrys. Will you wear it?'

Yes, Di thought she would wear

it. And so she did wear it, and looked so well in it, that when she drove up to the group of happy men at one o'clock, even her brothers were struck afresh with the charm of the brilliant, blooming face that the black velvet framed so becomingly.

'It was a noble thing of me to do, for the cap's mine,' Nellie said, when Jack Markham spoke of its 'effect on her sister' to her, 'and I look quite as well in it, I assure you; but I haven't a lover in the field, you see.'

And Jack, feeling himself called upon to say something, said he 'wasn't so sure of that.'

It was a very 'jolly luncheon,' they all agreed, so 'jolly' that the two men who were not related to the young ladies who had served it were in no hurry to get up and go after the partridges again. The dry warmth in the bright, clear September air—the crisp rustle of the light breeze through the trees that waved above them—the open, free unconventionality of the whole arrangement, brought them nearer together than they would have got in a month in a drawing-room.

'Somebody said somebody else sang,' Charlie Carew said, at last. 'Is it you, Di?'

'Yes,' Di replied, 'I'll sing presently.' Then she wished to be gracious to Jack, and added, 'Do you remember last year, when we brought you luncheon one day, how we all sang away the whole afternoon?'

'Yes,' he remembered it.

'Ah! try that song that you sang then, will you, Jack?' Henry Prescott asked. He was very anxious that his friend should shine before his future brother-in-law. 'It will be in character, for there's a "mill going round" yonder, and you must often have met Di—I mean we have often all of us met here.'

'Do persuade him to sing the applicable ditty,' Charlie Carew said, half smiling, to Nellie; and she answered, 'So I will,' and turned to Jack with a request for it worded in such a way that he could not, or did not, refuse, but began at once:—

'I wait alone where once we met,'

And I see the mill go round;

And in fancy I almost hear it yet,

That once familiar sound.

It is hard to love on, as I loved you then,

And to know you are lost to me;

It is hard to linger, and linger again,

Alone by our trysting tree.

I hear the sound of a horse's hoof;

Come on, my rider gay!

O Fate! a cruel west and woof,

Have you wove since the other day!

'The mill goes round, and the river flows,

And the sun shines—that's so strange,

Just as though they none of them saw my woes

Just as though there had been no change.

But I wait alone where once we met,

Where we swore to be fond and true,

Where we vowed that we never would forget

I wait alone—for you.

In vain I list for the horse's hoof!

Sigh in vain for the rider gay!

O Fate! a cruel west and woof,

Have you wove since the other day.'

The singer's voice failed him a little in the last line, and when he finished silence sat like a cloud over them for a minute, then it was broken.

(To be continued.)



DOWN AT CLOVELLY.

DOWN at Clovelly, certainly. Go, if you can, and look about well while there; for you will see something to remember, something unlike aught that has met your gaze before, something that may claim to be like nothing but itself. 'Murray' does not exaggerate one iota when he designates it 'the most romantic village in Devonshire, and probably in the kingdom.' If there be a town or village in England the journeying through which is a veritable 'Getting up stairs' (and down again), it is Clovelly. No mere steep paths, no ascending and descending roads, no slopes at which the coachman need to put on the drag, will suffice at Clovelly. Gradients such as Jehu never dreamed of, quirks and corners such as no vehicle ever rounded, mark the High Street of this notable place. Whether a nurserymaid could steer a perambulator and baby through the place is a problem which has probably not yet been solved; but if the attempt were made, we should not like to be the baby.

The reader need not consult the Index to 'Bradshaw' in the hope of discovering Clovelly; the name will not be found there. But if a map of sweet Devonshire be examined, we shall perchance see the place marked on the line of coast between Bideford and Hartland Point, the extreme north-west of the county. Nay, we must not be too sure even of this; for Clovelly is one of those flowers which 'blush unseen'—nearly; it is omitted altogether in many maps; and the coach or 'bus itself does not come nearer than a mile or so to the village. If, after a hurried walk, you reach the cross-road a minute too late, there is no hope for you save in a nine-mile trudge to Bideford. No friendly conductor lifts his finger to encourage you in your perplexity; you must ascertain coach-hours beforehand, and keep to them, unless you are a pedestrian like Walter White or Elihu Burritt.

The strange little bays, coves,

combes, inlets, glens, on the coast of North Devon, are known to the lovers of natural scenery as being among the most beautiful spots in England. Some of them are quite unique, like nothing else to be seen on other coasts. An eloquent writer describes, with the admiration of one who knows them well, 'those delightful glens, which cut the high table-lands of the confines of Devon and Cornwall and opening each through its gorge of down and rock towards the boundless Western Ocean. . . . Each is like the other, and each is like no other English scenery. Each has its upright walls, inland of rich oak-wood, nearer the sea of dark-green furze, then of smooth turf, then of weird black cliffs which range out right and left far into the deep sea, in castles, spires, and wings of jagged iron-stone. Each has its narrow strip of fertile meadow; its crystal trout-stream, winding across and across from one hill-foot to the other; its grey stone mill, with the water sparkling and humming round the dipping wheel; its dark rock-pools among the tide-mark, where the salmon-trout gather in from their Atlantic wanderings after each autumn flood; its ridge of blown sand, bright with golden trefoil and crimson lady's fingers; its grey bank of polished pebbles, down which the stream rattles towards the sea below. Each has its black field of jagged shark's-tooth rock, which paves the cove from side to side, streaked here and there with a pink line of shell sand, and laced with white foam from the eternal surge, stretching in parallel lines out to the coast, in strata set upright on edge, or tilted towards each other at strange angles by primæval earthquakes. Such is the "Mouth," as these coves are called, and such the jaws of teeth which they display, one rasp of which would grind abroad the timbers of the stoutest ship. To landward, all richness, softness, and peace; to seaward, a waste and brawling wilderness of rock and water, barren

to the fisherman, and hopeless to the shipwrecked mariner.'

Short as is the distance from Clovelly to the spots just described, it is sufficient to give a different character to the coast. The 'Mouths' occur in that line of sea-margin which boldly faces the west, from Hartland Point to Bude Haven, partly in Devon and partly in Cornwall; and doubtless they receive their impress from some peculiar action of the winds and waves, currents and storms, in that direction. At and near Clovelly, the coast is marked by an alternation of precipitous cliffs and bold wooded heights, winding round coves and bays, sometimes presenting a small area of level ground near the water, but more frequently plunging down into the deep with a suddenness rather embarrassing to house-builders. Yet have the fishermen managed to make homes for themselves in many of these secluded nooks; and thus has Clovelly become what it is—a fishing village that turns its back upon the land in very odd fashion. Born of the sea, it loves the sea, and turns its clean white face towards the sea—leaving the chimneypots alone to claim acquaintance with the land. The Clovelly men have caught herrings and mackerel, plaice and conger, any time these three hundred years—perhaps twice three hundred. In the Elizabethan days, when rumours of Spanish Armadas converted all Englishmen into heroes, and when a gallant gentlemanly spirit pervaded society, Devonshire was distinguished for its public energy, its bold, daring men. Plymouth took the lead; but North Devon also made its voice heard; Ilfracombe, Bideford, Barnstaple, Appledore, and Clovelly sent forth undaunted spirits who pursued voyages of discovery to regions then little known: and spirits equally bold offered their services to the maiden queen when her dominions were threatened by the Spaniard. The Drakes and Hawkinses, Raleighs and Gilberts, Grenvilles and Oxenham, Leighs and Carys—all were Devonshire men of those times.

The Rev. C. Kingsley, in his re-

markable Elizabethan story of 'Westward Ho!' has not forgotten little Clovelly. The readers of the story will remember that Oxenham, when inciting the Bideford folk to engage in the wonderful voyages about that time made to the New World, said to them vehemently—'You won't let the Plymouth men say that the Bideford men daren't follow them? North Devon against South: it is who'll join? who'll join? It is but a step of a way after all, and sailing as smooth as a duck-pond as soon as you're past Cape Finisterre. I'll run a Clovelly herring-boat there and back for a wager of twenty pounds, and never ship a bucketfull all the way. Who'll join?'

:" " Oh, who will join, jolly mariners all?
And who will join? says he, oh!
To fill his pockets with good red goold,
By sailing on the sea, oh!" "

It will also be remembered that Clovelly had the honour of producing Salvation Yeo, one of the adventurers who went 'Westward ho!' and who was described by a companion as 'a tall man and black, and sweareth awfully in his talk, the Lord forgive him!' but who characterized himself as having been 'born in Clovelly Street in the year 1526, where my father exercised the mystery of a barber-surgeon, and a preacher of the people since called Anabaptists, for which I return humble thanks to God.' It was near Clovelly, too, that Mr. Kingsley makes Will Cary overtake Eustace Leigh and the two Jesuits—important personages in the story.

From the Clovelly of fiction we go to the Clovelly of fact, and we will enter it by the lovely walk called the 'Hobby.' Oh, that all hobbies were equally pleasant, equally free from all that could anger or injure any human being! A hobby worthy to be remembered is this. The owner of all the land hereabouts, a wealthy baronet, possesses a fine house in a beautiful park; and beyond the limits of this park is a dense wood clothing the whole surface of a series of bold hills dipping down into the sea. Through this wood the owner has

cut a level winding road about three miles in length, at a height of three or four hundred feet above the level of the sea—sometimes so buried in foliage that the sun's light can hardly penetrate; sometimes touching a point where the beautiful sea comes in view, far down beneath; sometimes bending abruptly inland, in order to wind round a lovely inlet or glen, at the bottom of which a stream is brawling; but everywhere bounded on the left or southern side by a steep elevation, thickly studded with trees which have borne many a winter's storm. This sea-girt, elevated, umbrageous road the Devonshire baronet calls his 'Hobby;' and as he happens to be one of those men who do not churlishly keep their pleasures all to themselves, and as the Hobby is really a delightful place, there is something to be thankful for that a traveller may enter it without fee or form, and with no further trouble than passing through a gate—or sometimes climbing over it.

We have passed through this gate; we have walked the Hobby in great joyousness; we have emerged at another gate farther west; and lo! there is Clovelly before us. No, not before us, but *under* us. We lean on a rail and look over a ledge, and there are the Clovelly houses two or three or even four hundred feet beneath. Every Clovelly cottage has the privilege of looking down the chimney of its next door neighbour. Little ledges and miniature terraces come into sight at various depths beneath the eye, each having a white stone house or two perched upon it, and each fringed by gambolling children, whose immunity from danger is one of the marvels of the place. Fishermen are lolling and talking on one little terrace; blue shirts and blue trousers are hanging on a line on another; women are carrying to another sundry pails of water, brought from places apparently almost inaccessible. It is evident at a glance that the whole village is built on a series of rocky ledges, two or more houses on each; and the problem to be solved is whether anything deserving the name of a

street can wind its way among those ledges.

From the Hobby gate a steep road descends in nearly a straight line to the extent of a few hundred yards—steep enough to make both horse and man pant, but still a road laboriously accessible to wheel vehicles. Then a sharp turn presents itself, and with it an abandonment of this road. We have High Street, Clovelly, before us. The horse, Dobbin, can pass up and down, but woe to the vehicle that should make the attempt! Virtually the one street of Clovelly is a zigzag staircase some hundred feet in height; for although the steps are neither so narrow nor so high as ordinary steps, yet steps they are, and steps they must be, to enable the Clovellians to make progress at all. On a roadway without such steps down we should go with a run. Passing several of the clean stone houses, we come to the inn, the one link between Clovelly and the civilised world above. A tidy little inn it is, with its clean rooms, its little terrace in front, and its delicious fresh herrings for breakfast or tea. But oh! for that insatiable cockneyism, that yearning for a visitors' book! Clovelly, begun to be known as a curious place, and begun to be visited by tourists, must forsooth have its visitors' book at the little inn; and, as a consequence, we find John Thomson recording how pleasantly he spent a day at Clovelly; Mr. and Mrs. Clutterbuck evincing their sense of the civility experienced at the inn; Mr. and the two Misses Higginbottom leaving on record their appreciation of Clovelly herrings; Mr. Bolt and party announcing their determination to revisit the place next year; and Mr. Augustus Simper describing in verse his sensations when strolling with Agnes among the crannies and corners of the little bay. Shut the book and pass on.

Turn one corner, then another, then another, down, down the steps, wondering whether we shall ever reach the bottom, and wondering still more why the Clovelly children do not break their necks by tumbling off the ledges into the depths

below. But Clovelly children do *not* break their necks, nor need we, although the stair road is really a perplexing one. Half way down we come to a small platform a few yards square, the domain of a coastguardsmen, who from his Acropolis looks down upon the world of waters below, and turns an instinctive eye to a smuggler's boat under any disguise or subterfuge. But smuggling has gone much out of fashion; and the honest, hardy, weatherbeaten representative of her Majesty has little else to do than to keep his weather eye open. Down, down again to other ledges, other little terraces, on which the houses are perched in the oddest fashion imaginable. At some places it is not quite certain whether we are scrambling along the High Street or into the passage of a house, so much are they alike; but by dint of a careful picking and looking at our steps we at length reach the bottom of this very original staircase. There is the little bay, a doll of a place, with a little fishing pier and a little bit of beach on which the bargainings for fish take place. The Clovellians are all fishermen; or if some of them live by selling commodities to the rest, it is hard to tell where the shops are. According as fish are or are not plentiful, so is Clovelly flourishing or desponding; for fish is here the all in all, the gold mine that pays for everything. The Bideford and Hartland folk, and others from the interior, come down to the beach by a very circuitous road which avoids the village altogether, and buy all that the fishermen have caught. Clovelly does not carry its own wares to market.

A beautiful picture does the village present when seen from a short distance out at sea. Lofty hills, dotted with trees to the summit, bound the little semicircular bay; and the white houses dot this green background at intervals from the sea level to a great height, giving to the village an aspect of largeness beyond its real character. On the one side can be seen the fine bold wooded hill round which the 'Hobby' has been cut; on the other side the equally fine hill occupied by the

mansion and park of Clovelly Court. Nor need the lover of stern bare rocks lack food to his taste, seeing that there is an abundance of mural precipices shooting down sheer into the sea, too sharply and abruptly to leave any beach at the rock foot. Hanging and clinging seaweeds, shells and their inhabitants, pebbles that would yield something to the lapidary, all are to be met with. The little terraces and ledges are visible higher and higher up the slope; the coastguardsmen is seen perched on his platform; the white stone houses, embosomed in trees, dot the picture; while Dobbin is labouring up the staircase, carrying on his back the coals necessary for the domestic wants of the inn and some of the cottages. Those coals are brought over from the opposite coast of South Wales, and are perhaps paid for in fish. It is clear that a road too steep for any vehicle can be surmounted only by bipeds and quadrupeds, and hence the necessity for Dobbin's services. It is among the oral traditions of Clovelly that once upon a time (and that not very long ago) Dobbin's predecessor was an old woman, whose sturdy back brought up the steep ascent a weight of coals that would have tried many a man even on a level road. But Clovelly has a right to do things in its own fashion, unlike its neighbours. As a village *sui generis* it must not be judged by ordinary standards. The fishermen are a goodnatured, simple-hearted folk, knowing very little of the world of Devonshire beyond their own little nook, and often disposed to wonder why other places are so much in a hurry. When the railway was opened as far as Bideford, such of the Clovellians as went to see it stared indeed. If you chat with one of them on the little jetty, perhaps he will ask you kindly to write a letter for him; his skill in the art of writing is but slender, and he wishes to send a message to his sister, who is in service in some other and more aristocratic part of the county. If you grant his request he will overwhelm you with thanks, and with a proffer of many more fresh herrings than you would

like to take away with you; or he would take them up to the inn for you, where you could have them broiled as an accompaniment to tea. Fifty miles across the estuary of the Bristol Channel, to the Welsh coast, is farther than he can see; but he is in a region of winter storms, and can tell many a tale of wreck and

disaster. Let us hope that Clovelly will never be a 'fashionable' place, with its steps cut away in smooth road-shape, and its nooks and corners made genteel and Torquay-like. Let Lynton and Lynmouth keep their tourists' hotels, but let the little inn at Clovelly never be ashamed of broiled herrings.

ALL SMOKE

IS a general proposition, which persons who are scrupulous to the letter in their statements might choose to modify into 'Nearly all people smoke.' There is a small minority who refrain from smoking; but those who do not smoke are considered, by those who do, as very poor creatures indeed.

Sometimes, on contemplating the hourly indulgence in this universal habit, this cosmopolitan luxury, I ask myself how the world—that is to say the Old World—got on before A.D. 1550, or thereabouts. We were all poor creatures then; our mouths were undecorated with cigars, our pockets ungarnished with lucifers, vestas, and neat little volumes of cigarette paper. No young ladies, then, embroidered tobacco pouches, or sold them at fancy fairs for fancy prices. The tinder-box and its substitutes were confined to the kitchen, or to the baggage of serious enterprising travellers who might have to roast their own dinner over dry sticks, after shooting it and preparing it themselves in the forest. The meerscham, the yard of clay, and the *brule-gueule*, or short, black, muzzle-burner, were equally unknown and uninvented. There is no smoke without fire, and there is no tobacco-smoke without tobacco; and yet the world did get on, somehow, before A.D. 1550.

'All Smoke' is so slight an exaggeration, that it might be allowed to pass uncavilled at. All men smoke—as all ducks and geese swim—with exceptions, which, if they do not confirm, certainly do not invalidate the rule. It may be granted, too, that the habit of smoking varies in intensity at different spots of the

civilized globe. In France, smoking wears the teeth out of the workman's mouth at an early age. He cannot work without his pipe; while his hands are busy, his lips must puff. He cannot walk to his meals without it; he cannot digest them afterwards without it. On a holiday, especially, he cannot take his pleasure without it; he cannot go to sleep without it. Paley said that teeth were made, not to ache, but to eat with. A French artisan's or labourer's teeth were given to him to hold a pipe. That is the final cause of French dentition ever since the creation of the human race. For the last five thousand years it has been perfecting itself for that main purpose. Iron would not stand the wear and tear that many of these teeth have stood. But considering that teeth are also valuable for other purposes besides pipe-holding, I wonder that that ingenious nation has not invented some patent indestructible mouth pipe-holder.

Then again, in Germany, do they smoke, or don't they? It cannot be denied that they do, a little. Not to insist on what the vulgar does, I will merely instance in this respect the ways of a German professor, as sketched by an able cotemporary.* Your German professor never gets on in the world, and he smokes all the day and most of the night. It must be allowed that no human being, not even a Turk, nor an English ensign, nor a French peasant of the Departement du Nord, can smoke anything like a German professor. A really practised and hardened German professor will not only smoke during every other

* 'Saturday Review,' March 18, 1865.

moment of his waking hours, but he will smoke all through his dinner, taking alternately a mouthful of food and a mouthful of smoke. His spending years in proving that Being and Not-Being are the same, or that they are not the same, and if not, why not, and how otherwise, might seem to be irrelevant to the All-Smoke question; but some people might reasonably opine that it is only a natural consequence of the smoke.

In northern Italy at least, smoking on the wing has become so general a practice, that almost as much attention seems paid to your whiff by the way as to your reaching your final destination. At the Turin station, you step out on the platform, to take your place in a departing train.

'Fumare! Fumare!' shouts the guard, pointing to a second-class carriage.

'Non Fumare; Genoa!' says a traveller who is making his first appearance on this stage. 'I don't want to go to Fumare, but to Genoa. I don't even remember to have seen Fumare either on the time-table or on the map. "Non Fumare, non Fumare, se vi piace," if you please.'

'Non Fumare! Non Fumare!' again shouts the guard, pointing to a contiguous carriage.

Quoth I to my puzzled fellow-traveller, 'The train is going to Genoa, sir; but "fumare" indicates the carriages where you may smoke, "non fumare," where you may not.'

'Ah! Thank you. To be sure!' he said. 'My Italian has grown rusty, for want of use. I took Fumare for a station!'

Nor may we in justice neglect American exploits in the smoking line. A letter from Winconsin mentioned the existence there of an individual named Joseph (it should have been Methuselah) Crilé, who was supposed at that date (April, 1865) to be the oldest man on earth. He is, or was, a Frenchman, born in the neighbourhood of Yvetot, in Normandy. His baptismal register assigned him, then, the respectable age of one hundred and thirty-nine years. He was still active, able to

cleave wood, and to walk distances of several miles. His habits were regular; his consumption of drink was moderate; but he could not live without smoking from morning till night. If tobacco be a poison, we must either admit that it is a very slow one, or else suppose that Methuselah Crilé had attained what is technically called 'a tolerance' of its influence.

From the aged, turn we to the juveniles. The Journal of Education, of Ohio (date unknown), informs us that in one of the schools of that state, consisting of five-and-thirty boys and girls, there are nine little boys who quid, and five little girls who smoke tobacco. The Journal seems annoyed by that statistical fact. 'We say nothing about the quidding,' it wails aloud; 'but when we think of the smokeresses, we almost fancy ourselves at the Sandwich Islands.' The Journal is wrong to express surprise. In a go-ahead nation like the United States, the young idea, taught or untaught, will sometimes make extraordinary shoots. All that remains is for American mistresses of deportment to teach young ladies graceful ways of holding a cigarette, and of making the smoke, as it escapes, invariably curl in the line of beauty.

If the novelty with which America presented us, only three hundred years ago, had been attractive to any of the senses, we might be less surprised at the hold it has taken of all the Old World populations. But its power is quite paradoxical. Although the plant itself is of portly mien, prepared tobacco has nothing which pleases or invites the eye; while to the taste, the smell, the stomach, it is at the outset absolutely offensive. Who is there who does not remember the painful experiment of learning to smoke?

Amongst others, Napoleon I. either never could or never would learn. In Egypt, he pretended to smoke—as he held out his possible conversion to Islamism—to please the Egyptians by adopting their customs. But he never could light his pipe himself. It was his Mameluke Roustan's duty to set it going. If his master let it go out again,

charcoal and matches were not ruinously expensive.

Afterwards, when the Persian ambassador presented him with a very handsome pipe, he ordered his valet de chambre, Constant, to fill and light it. The fire being applied to the mouth of the bowl, all that remained was to make the tobacco catch; but in the way in which his Majesty set about it, no smoke would have appeared from that time till doomsday. He simply closed and opened his lips, without drawing the least in the world.

'What the deuce!' he exclaimed at last. 'There is no setting light to it.'

Constant diffidently ventured to observe that the Emperor did not proceed exactly in the usual way, and showed him the right mode of going to work; but the inapt scholar still returned to his bad imitation of the act of yawning. Tired at last of his useless efforts, 'Constant,' he blurted out, 'do you light the pipe; I cannot.'

So said, so done. It was returned to him with the steam well up, going at a high-pressure rate with a double Persian power of smoke. Scarcely had he drawn a whiff, when the smoke, which he did not know how to get rid of, went down his throat, coming out again through his nose and eyes. As soon as he had recovered his breath, 'Take it away!' he gasped, 'take it away! What an infection! What a set of pigs they must be! It has turned my stomach!'

He was ill for more than an hour afterwards; and he renounced for ever 'a pleasure, whose enjoyment,' he said, 'was only good to fill up the time of idle people with nothing better to do.'

Nature certainly has done her best to deter us from the use of the dreamy weed; and, as happened long ago, men cannot resist the temptation of forbidden fruit. And when I say men, I include with them women. Ladies might possibly be influenced by the same spirit of contradiction when they first thrust powdered tobacco up their pretty noses. According to the doggrel song put into the mouth of a snuff-

taking lady, somebody said they should not; consequently, they would.

'A pinch of snuff
That horrid stuff?
Take it? No, indeed, I can't.
Such, Sally, dear,
Was my idea,
Until my husband said "You shan't."
' "You shan't!" to me!
Fiddle-de-dee!
Of course I take it on the sly.
You know, dear Sally,
For "shan't" or "shall,"
What husbands say is—all my eye!

This spirited personage deserved, in return, to be addressed in the highflown language in which Balzac (not the modern novelist) requested a pinch of a lady who flourished in the days of Louis XIV. 'Madame,' he said, 'permit my digital extremities to insinuate themselves into your tobacchic concavity, to obtain from it the subtle powder which dissipates and confounds the aquatic humours of my inundated and swampy brain.'

Who, again, would ever have supposed beforehand that the taxes on so detestable an article would ever produce an important item in the State's revenue? Yet such we know to be the case in more than one European country.

Fancy, some three hundred years ago, when Jean Nicot, king's advocate and ambassador extraordinary, first sent tobacco to France from Portugal, as a present to that amiable queen, Catherine de Medicis—only fancy a bold financier requesting an audience of the Cardinal de Lorraine, and addressing him to the following purport.

'Monseigneur, knowing the treasury to be in a somewhat pitiable condition, I am come to propose a tax which will bring you in a couple of hundred millions of francs, cheerfully paid—voluntary contributions to the State revenue. There will be taxpayers in every family throughout the land, and you will never have to seize or squeeze to collect it.'

'State your project,' the cardinal might coldly reply.

'Monseigneur, it is simply this. The Government has only to reserve to itself the exclusive privilege of selling a certain herb, which is to

be reduced to a powder sufficiently fine for people to stuff it up their noses. The plant may also be left in the leaf, to be chewed, or to be burnt for the purpose of inhaling its smoke.'

'Your plant, then, affords a delightful perfume, sweeter than amber, musk, or roses?'

'By no means,' the speculator would reply. 'Its smell is unpleasant rather than not.'

'I understand. It is a panacea, a specific, endowed with marvellous healing virtues—perhaps snatching sick men out of the jaws of death.'

'Not at all, quite the contrary. The habit of sniffing in the powdered herb weakens the memory and destroys the smell. It causes giddiness. There are instances of its bringing on blindness and even apoplexy. Chewed, it renders the breath offensive and puts the stomach out of order. Inhaling the smoke is a different affair. First attempts bring on pains in the chest, nausea, swimming in the head, colic, and cold perspiration; but in the course of time and by persevering, you gradually get accustomed to it.'

'How many people do you believe you will find to be fools and idiots enough to punish themselves for your tax-gathering purposes by smoking this plant or stuffing their nostrils with it?'

'There will one day be, Monseigneur, more than twenty millions in France alone. I don't mention the millions in England, Germany, and elsewhere, because they, Monseigneur, pay *us* no taxes.'

If the cardinal had ordered the schemer out of doors in a huff, or got him put into a lunatic asylum, his contemporaries would have given him small blame for it. And yet, as events have proved, he would have made a great mistake in rejecting that counsel.

This last bit of badinage is the whimsical view which Alphonse Karr takes of the tobacco-tax question; but he exaggerates, perhaps, the dangers of the weed when employed with ordinary precaution. Another of his countrymen, Eugene Pelletan, rivals our King James I. in the violence of his counterblast

against tobacco, ascribing to it a considerable share in causing what he considers the decadence of France. Be it noted that he holds up for wine, lauding it as the genuine national beverage, and utterly proscribing the use of alcohol. Dram-drinking is his terror and aversion, while beer finds little favour in his eyes. Wine, for him, is his health and sanity; *eau de vie* and absinthe, madness and ruin. The flame of brandy burns up the blood, and the race of Frenchmen is dwindling away in consequence. The standard height for soldiers is obliged to be reduced. Thanks to absinthe, thanks to the distillers of beetroot—and the consumption of alcohol augments every year—in another century, perhaps in less, the world will really behold Frenchmen consumptive, puny, rickety, unable to handle either spade or gun, like the Frenchmen of old English caricatures. Now alcohol calls in the aid of tobacco, by the very nature of things, out of simple symmetry. One over-excites the brain, the other benumbs and stupefies it.

According to M. Pelletan, the very introduction of tobacco could not happen in an ordinary way. The circumstances accompanying it were necessarily startling and fantastic, like the compounding a charm or the completing an incantation. In the sixteenth century the monsoon wafted to Manilla a vessel manned by apes of a singular species. Dressed up like men, they imitated human shape so well as to cause an illusion for the first few moments. But they ate fire-sticks, and rejected the smoke through a nasal protuberance of portentous length.

These curious animals were Spaniards, who had just learnt in America the art of smoking, and brought it piping hot to the coast of Asia. The inhabitants of the Indian Archipelago, accustomed to the small noses of the Malayan race, could not behold without secret horror the cornucopious aquiline of the Castilian type. The long noses got the upper hand of the short noses, thanks to the help of the arquebuse. The conquerors tamed the conquered race, reducing

them to slavery. Do you know how? By stupefying and besotting them with cigars.

France offered a long resistance to the invasion of tobacco. The regent distributed it gratuitously, to excite a taste for it and create an artificial want. The tobacco tax, at that time, brought in a few hundred thousand francs, at the very outside. It now produces two hundred millions.

But, at least, in the eighteenth century, tobacco was taken in powder by the nose, and there was something sympathetic in that fashion of taking it. The snuff-box passed from hand to hand; fingers were thrust into it, in turn. The box itself represented a work of art, a jewel of price, a breviary of the heart, a portrait of some beloved object.

It was a mode well suited to the affected society of effeminate seigneurs, smart little abbés, giddy-brained duchesses, crumpled-up beauties, and heart-shaped mouths constantly baited with a smile. The action of the thumb in administering the pinch, by making the nose turn up more and more, gave it a defiant air; and the snuff itself, by peppering the mucous membrane, spurred the intellect, and the witticism exploded. Heaven knows what sort of witticism! But the eighteenth century thought of little else than love-making, with an epigram now and then to break the monotony.

Snuff, incessantly injected into the nasal sinus, ended by destroying the sense of smell. If the eighteenth century indulged in the love of flowers, it did so unconscious of their perfume. Its nose was stopped up. Now whoever loses the impressionability of a sense, at the same time loses a portion of native modesty. Witness the blind and the deaf and dumb. The eighteenth century, through its nasal deafness, became mad after game kept till it was high and tainted—after putrefaction on a silver dish. For the same reason it courted coarse amours, the gallantry of the lamp-post and the gutter. The Du Barry reigned everywhere, from the highest to the lowest, in aristocratic circles. So-

ciety so foul could only be cleansed by plunging it in the wash-tub of revolution.

And now that man has recovered his nose, that he can inhale the perfume of beauty and flowers, he extinguishes another sense, that is, another perception of modesty. He takes in tobacco by the mouth, he breathes it in smoke. He converts the sanctuary of taste into a chimney. He lines and impregnates every corner of his palate with a sooty coal of nicotine. And yet that is the place where the immortal soul gives audience, the dwelling-place of speech—speech, the glorious communication of man with man, of man with woman. And when he whispers a confidence of the heart, it floats from his lip infected by the pipe, like the hot puff of fulsome vapour which reeks up from the window of an underground kitchen. What poetry can words of love retain when they present themselves in such bad company? A woman must sadly want to pardon the man when she goes so far as to excuse the cigar.

It is in vain that Nature (who appoints sentinels to guard us from ourselves) protests against this internal fumigation of our persons. In vain does she charitably warn us of the danger by the very difficulty we have in acclimatising ourselves to tobacco smoke. The contagion of example draws us on: the demon of the pipe has got possession of us. No doubt the novitiate is long. We suffer sea-sickness ten times a day; we shudder with chilly ague fits, but by dint of undergoing the penance we acquire the right of smelling offensively.

'Tobacco has killed kissing,' says Michelet. It does more; it closes the drawing-room. Formerly people conversed after dinner. Men and women, assembled round the same lamp, went through a course of mutual instruction. The men initiated the women into intellectual life; the women taught the men the graceful arts of pleasing. Both parties were gainers by the bargain. It was free exchange in all its splendour.

But the male portion of the French

population are anxious to compete with Yarmouth red herring and Hamburgh smoked beef. Whenever they are asked to dinner, as soon as they get back to the drawing-room they cast melancholy glances in all directions. What does it matter to them that their hostess is handsome or witty and clever? Has a young man of the present day any need to toss back the ball, and answer one amusing speech by another? After dinner he is faint and languid; his thoughts are absent; his heart is wandering after a Havannah cigar.

But, as a well-bred woman cannot convert her drawing-room into a pothouse, every creature who wears or might wear a moustache takes his departure at the earliest occasion, and goes into female society where he can smoke at ease, lolling back with his legs on the chimney-piece. Every evening *La Jeunesse Dorée* takes practical lessons in cynicism. Now and then an *élégante*, moving in good society, in despair at the cigar's severing humanity in two and condemning her to a life of conversational celibacy, endeavours to retain the deserters by opening a smoking-room in her mansion, and herself setting the example with a cigarette.

But tobacco has a fuller flavour in an equivocal than in a respectable house. There, at least, it can be moistened with beer and brandy. And thus a stinking West Indian plant, burnt in the human gullet, banishes the wine-glass more and more. Neither the perfumed produce of Médoc nor the electric vintages of Burgundy retain their hold on the smoker's palate. The unhappy wretch plunges his lip in a frothy and bitter decoction of hops, or swallows a glass of kirsch at a gulp, which is one way as good as another of firing a pistol into one's mouth.

Smoking, like dram-drinking, is the consequence of having nothing to do, of disenchantment of the heart and mind. A prisoner of state alleged, 'Before entering my cell, I was innocent of tobacco; but I learned to smoke under bolts and bars, to beguile the weariness of solitude.'

The increasing consumption of tobacco is frightful. Children ten years of age already smoke. But it is time to think of a remedy. Tobacco is a poison—a slow one, if you will—but certainly a poison; for it benumbs the brain, extinguishes the memory, brings on giddiness, and finally engenders those horrible diseases, cancer in the mouth and softening of the spinal marrow. When it does not kill totally, it kills partially. In concert with its comrade alcohol, it ravages the organism and dwarfs the species.

Tobacco injures the human race not only physically, but morally. It strikes thought with atrophy and paralyzes action. With every whiff of tobacco smoke a man exhales an energy or a virtue. Germany smokes and dreams; Spain smokes and sleeps. Turkey, who has been smoking these last three hundred years, has no longer strength to stand on her legs. Reclining on a divan, she dreams all day long. But Toussenel somewhere says, 'A vertical nation will always conquer a horizontal nation.' Take care of yourselves, O Gallic youth! Unless you throw your cigar away, France may possibly vanish in smoke. Such is the conclusion of M. Pelletan's invective.

Another French author, M. Jolly, member of the Imperial Academy of Medicine, is indignant that smoking should be openly permitted in a government school. 'As if,' he says, 'learning the pipe-and-cigar exercise were a necessary preparation for serious studies; as if such a novitiate were the best introduction to a career of science, arms, and letters.' Worse still; a physician, whose name he suppresses out of respect for the rest of his colleagues, had the singular idea of proposing the use of tobacco smoke as a salutary regulation for French Lyceums!

Tobacco did not find its way into the different countries of Europe either through the same channel or exactly at the same date. Its employment as an excitant and a stupefier is probably as old as the aboriginal populations of the New World itself. But its first introduction to

the Old World cannot have occurred earlier than the sixteenth century. We owe it to a Spanish missionary named Fray Romano Pane, who had been taken to America by Christopher Columbus, to convert the natives to Christianity. The worthy friar having remarked, in the priests of the god Kiwasa, the fanatic excitement produced by the vapour of tobacco leaves in fermentation or combustion, took it into his head to send seeds of the plant to Charles V., in all probability little suspecting that he was transmitting to his sovereign the germs of a revolution destined one day to overrun the world.

Such at least appears to be the origin of the culture of tobacco by Europeans. Spain had it first. This occurred in 1518, an epoch equally fruitful in superstitious frivolities and historical events. Cuba was the first spot selected, on account of the superiority of its produce. Portugal soon followed Spain's example, by growing tobacco in several districts of Brazil. Portugal also, observing how its sale increased, was the first to draw a revenue from a tax on tobacco. About that time, Cardinal Della Santa Croce, then the Pope's nuncio in Portugal, imported tobacco into Italy. At the instigation of Admiral Drake, the Anglo-Americans had already broken up portions of wilderness in Virginia and Maryland for the special culture of tobacco. All this implies a certain demand, which, though partial and limited at first, must have been steadily on the increase.

Tobacco, therefore, was not only grown by, but afforded a revenue to a portion of Europe, when Jean Nicot, French Envoy at Lisbon, who had cultivated it in his garden, and had experimented on himself with tobacco powder as a cure for headache, offered it, in 1560, to Queen Catherine de Medicis, as a sovereign remedy against that complaint.

Hitherto tobacco had only been employed as a fumigator, by the aid of various apparatus, which have undergone sundry modifications before reaching the state in which we see them at present. But this time it was no longer a question of in-

haling the smoke of the plant; its powder had to be snuffed in by the nose. And it was thus that, after journeying by sea and by land, and traversing a portion of Europe, tobacco made its entry into France by the narrow passage of her nostrils.

The moment could not be better chosen nor more opportune. The queen who, as well as her son Francis II., suffered from obstinate headaches, received the remedy with the hearty welcome always given to now and far-fetched specifics. Of its success nothing is recorded. All we know is that, from that date, headaches have often been the pretext for snuff-taking.

The custom soon spread, with incredible rapidity, throughout all classes of society. There was a mania, a rage for snuff. Rich and poor, men and women, healthy and sick, every one, furnished with their little roll of tobacco, and the grater wherewith to reduce it to powder, strove who should offer it and take it the most eagerly. Far from falling into neglect as time wore on, as often happens with the best of things, the use of snuff was constantly on the increase; to such an extent that, during the reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., it was almost the etiquette to present one's self at court grater in hand, the shirt frill bespattered with snuff, the nose more or less stuffed with the precious powder, the cheeks slightly tinged with its hue, and the clothing thoroughly scented with its smell. Some few of our aged contemporaries may have seen the last relics of that memorable epoch.

But the tobacco graters (although articles of finery which rivalled the most expensive fans) could not long survive the improvements in the art of reducing tobacco to dust by machinery. They were succeeded by snuff-boxes, displaying in turn the marks of extravagant luxury. Both graters and snuff-boxes are alike responsible for the immense consumption of tobacco in France. No nation ever snuffed to such an excess; and that in spite of criticism and raillery, in spite of the advice of physicians, in spite even of the authority of kings and popes.

The Sultan and the Muscovite Sovereign threatened death, the King of Persia amputation of the nose, Urban VIII. excommunication, Christian IV. of Denmark the milder punishments of fines and whippings, to persons guilty of tobacco-taking. But we know what little influence both laws and reason, either singly or in combination, have in checking the spread of a foolish fashion. We need not search history for examples—we need not go back to Rome, nor even to Venice—having cotemporary instances before our eyes. ‘The mode’ will ever manifest its despotism by forcing society to adopt some new-fangled folly of the day.

Nothing, indeed, proves better than the history of tobacco the strange turns taken by human affairs—by the ways and doings of men and women. An acrid, fetid, and repulsive plant, unused by and unknown to all except the savages of America, is brought over to Europe. One would say, before the experiment was tried, that it was sure to be despised and rejected, or at least let alone, and consigned to a corner in a druggist’s shop with other nauseous and medicinal articles. But instead of that, presto! it suddenly finds favour as if by enchantment. The habits of nations are changed in consequence; a new indulgence is created; a new want, of primary necessity, makes itself felt by the world at large. Tobacco’s triumphant march in advance shows the power of imitation not only on the human mind, but over the destinies of a people.

Nevertheless, the French did not yet smoke, although smoking was already common in Spain, Holland, Switzerland, and Prussia. And although France tolerated foreign smokers in the spirit of her habitual courtesy, she still kept exclusively to her pinch of snuff, seemingly in protest against what appeared incompatible with national manners.

As to the time consumed in smoking, by way of parenthesis, I say nothing, because in many cases the amusement is adopted avowedly as a means of killing time. Snuffing, it has been calculated, is even a greater waste of time than smoking.

People can smoke and go on with what they are about; while snuffing, they do that and nothing else. Now every habitual snuffer is estimated to take a pinch six times at least per hour. Every pinch requires the employment of the handkerchief, the taking out of and returning it to the pocket, the opening and shutting of the box, and other indispensable manœuvres, taking up in all not less than a minute and a half, or nine minutes per hour, or two hours twenty-four minutes per day (of sixteen hours only, not twenty-four), or thirty-six days and a half (of twenty-four hours) per annum, or exactly four whole years during a life of forty years—just the tithe, in short, of a person’s existence.

Somebody asked Abernethy whether the moderate use of snuff would injure his brain.

‘No, sir,’ replied the irritable doctor; ‘for nobody with an ounce of brains in his head would ever think of taking snuff.’

Louis XIV. did not smoke, but at least he tolerated smokers. Jean Bart was one of the first personages who introduced the pipe to Court, whither he had been sent for by the king. As it was not yet daylight when he presented himself, he had to wait in the antechamber before admission to the presence. Knowing nobody at Versailles, he found the time long; so he took out his pipe, struck a light with flint and steel, and set to smoking in right good earnest. Such conduct was naturally considered extremely improper—the height of impudence. Nobody had ever before smoked in the king’s apartment. The courtiers were shocked; the guards wanted to turn him out.

He coolly replied, puffing away, ‘I have contracted this habit in the king my master’s service, and it has become a necessity. I believe him to be too just a monarch to be angry at my satisfying it.’

As he had never appeared at Court, there was only the Comte de Forbin who knew him; and he, fearing the consequences of the freak, dared not acknowledge him as his friend. So somebody went and told the king that a strange

fellow had presumed to smoke, and refused to quit the antechamber.

'Let him do as he likes,' said the king, with a laugh; 'I bet anything that it is Jean Bart.' Adding soon afterwards, 'Let him come in.'

On entering, his Majesty received him cordially, remarking, 'You, Jean Bart, are the only person allowed to smoke here.'

The name of Jean Bart and the king's gracious reception made a strange alteration in the courtiers' manners. When he left the king, they thronged about him, asking how he managed to get out of Dunkerque with his little squadron in spite of the fleet blockading the port. Ranging them close together in a line before him, he pushed his way through, elbowing right and left and pommeling them with his fists. Then, turning round, he said, 'That is the way I managed it.'

Sailors elsewhere had already indulged themselves both with the pipe and the quid, and so distinguished themselves from the rest of the service. But examples like these spread quickly, if only for the gratification of curiosity—as happened even to the daughters of the Grand Monarque. One day, when they were indulging in the novelty, without asking their governess's permission, they were surprised by the entrance of their royal father, who was struck all of a heap at the sight.

Copying the navy, the army soon smoked, beginning with the officers and *not* ending with the common soldiers; for now all France smokes like one man, with a single mouth, keeping millions upon millions of pipes alight. The pastime is not confined to the bivouac, but is practised everywhere, at all times, in all weathers, in all ranks of society, from the imperial throne to the meanest hovel. Princes and ministers, masters and valets, rich and poor, great and little, everybody smokes, **ALL SMOKE**. Smoking is perpetrated on foot, on horseback, in private carriages, in railway ditto, at work, during repose, always and everywhere. Almost the only interruption are the hours devoted to rest and sleep; and that inter-

ruption will shortly cease, when France shall be as advanced as Germany. Tender youth is not held a sufficient reason for abstaining from the use of tobacco. The adolescent smokes; the child, the schoolboy would also smoke were he not prevented rather by paternal surveillance and scholastic discipline than by the giddiness, nausea, and intoxication which are consequent on his precocious attempts.

Declamation is powerless in the face of stubborn facts, and when people have resolved to do a thing, it is of no use advising them not to do it. Still, we cannot conceal from ourselves that England, as far as tobacco is concerned, is beginning to rival the social state above described. From the Continent doubtless we have imported smoking to excess, just as we have imported moustaches, beards, white tablecloths at dessert, and dinners *à la Russe*. The one may be as irresistible as the others; but, unfortunately, it is neither so inexpensive nor so harmless, for it involves the whole question of national hygiene, of the popular health, of the dwarfing of our race and the spread of disease.

Hardened smokers will go on in their own way, in spite of all they may read or hear; but beginners would do well to peruse attentively Dr. Richardson's able treatise 'For and Against Tobacco.' Although it is more Against than For, it is sufficiently impartial to command respect; witness the following passages:—

'The influence of tobacco on the heart has been very differently estimated by different writers. Some have conceived that its influence is entirely imaginary—others that it is most dangerous. The truth again lies, in this case, in separating functional from organic mischief. I do not think there is any evidence to show that tobacco alone is capable of producing structural change either on the valvular mechanism or the muscular fibre of the heart; on the contrary, I believe that in persons strongly disposed to rheumatism and gout—diseases which arise from the presence and accumulation

of acid matters in the blood—the tobacco, from its alkaline reaction, is rather a preventative to structural change in the heart than otherwise. I speak with diffidence on a subject which scarcely admits of demonstration; but yet I feel that I have had evidence and actual experience of the fact named. Once more; in persons who, either from necessity or ignorance, subject themselves to an unnatural degree of muscular exercise, and who make, as a consequence, egregious demands for labour on that pulsating organ which knows no rest; in such, I believe the influence of a pipe daily (I do not mean of many pipes), is beneficial rather than otherwise. In these, the tobacco puts a curb on the extra excitement, and, acting as a sedative on the heart, prevents its over-action and arrests its excessive development.

‘Nay, strange as it may appear, I am inclined to believe that tobacco, instead of increasing the evil effects of alcohol on the heart,

renders them less determinate; for alcohol tends to create fermentative changes in the stomach and alimentary system, and to give rise to those acid modifications of the blood on which the more serious organic diseases of the heart mainly rest; while the tendency of tobacco is to stop those changes. Alcohol also excites the action of the heart: tobacco subdues it. Thus, if two men sit down together and take an equal quantity of spirituous drink, and if one smoke and the other do not, the action of the heart will be much less increased in the smoker. I do not, of course, put this forward as an advantage, because it is very foolish for any one to take alcohol in excess; but I name the fact, in its simple meaning, as a fact.’

Finally, the writer is not, nor likely to be, a member of any anti-tobacco society. He is neither a slave to the cigar, nor an utter stranger to it. When he wants one, he takes it; when he does not feel to want one, he goes without it.

A LONDON POLICE COURT.



THE POLICE MAGISTRATE.

WHAT a record of folly, of guilt, of squalid want, improvidence, and vice—of fashionable dissipation and vulgar crime—is that curious document of many-handed signatures and fabulous nomenclature, called the 'Charge Sheet,' which is placed before the magistracy every morning, and faithfully reports the misdoings of the district—or rather such of them as are 'found out'—during the preceding night. You might almost fancy, on glancing at the names of the offenders, that the criminality of London is about equally divided among the Smiths, the Joneses and the Johnsons of the town.

Here is the hopeful son and heir of my Lord Screwby taking his turn in the dock with 'Opera Jack,' 'Seven Dial Sam,' and 'Bedford-bury Bill,' just out on ticket-of-leave. And the women, too! The bearded stranger from a foreign land, who has just stepped in to get a taste of London life 'under lock-and-key,' may well look startled to see the proportion which the fair and tender sex maintains in that sad collection of 'night-charges,' for it is a fact that nearly two-thirds of

drunkenness, are preferred against women.

But the sanguine believer in the popular notion that there is a law for the rich, and none for the poor, must wait till the night-charges are disposed of, and the 'summons-business' begins, if he would learn how the said 'poor' would be likely to improve their shining hours, if greater facilities were afforded them for taking 'legal proceedings' against one another.

To-day there are sixteen summonses on the list, having relation to sixteen assaults, committed by sixteen people (nearly all women) against sixteen other people—each of the complainants and defendants being armed with at least half a dozen witnesses, ready to swear point blank against each other: and, oh, gentle reader, if you would see the oath-swearing system in all its fulness of perfection, take thyself unto Bow Street or Worship Street some thirsty July afternoon, and behold a well-educated gentleman sitting in open court, and receiving 1200*l.* a year, chiefly for adjusting the squabbles arising daily among the female denizens of his district, who have parted with their only

shawls or shoes to obtain the price of the summons—a charge of two shillings, imposed by the legislature in the vain hope of checking frivolous complaints.

It is worthy of note that the magistrates, having their peculiarities also, adopt different methods of dealing with this class of business.

His worship, Mr. A., being a stickler for legal precision in regard to the rules of evidence, stops the witness every two minutes to remind her of the 'inadmissibility of statements irrelevant to the case, or having reference to alleged misdemeanours not embraced in the terms of the summons.' Thus:—

'Please yer worship, this female at the bar, if she can call herself sich——'

'Now, my good woman, no reflections upon the defendant, if you please.'

'Well, sir, ever since last Tuesday-week, come next Christmas twelvemonth——'

'Never mind about next Christmas twelvemonth. Be good enough to confine yourself to what occurred last week.'

'Please yer worship, she told Mr. Waters, her landlord——'

'Don't bother us with what she said to Mr. Waters, the landlord, but tell us what she said to you' (getting angry).

'Well, sir' (getting confused), 'Mrs. Finch told me——'

'Never mind what Mrs. Finch told you' (enraged); 'it isn't evidence, and it can't be taken down.'

In this way half an hour or more is consumed in the useless effort to get an ignorant woman to conform with the principles of evidence, as laid down by the recognized decisions of the courts.

But his worship's brother-magistrate, Mr. B., is not so scrupulous about the legal restrictions imposed by the forensic wisdom of ages, in the way of giving common evidence. His theory, in dealing with a woman, especially, is to let her have her own say in her own way. By suffering this simple process of self-exhaustion to go on, it is surprising how soon the real facts of the case, and,

better still, the real *motives* of the proceedings, are ascertained. Thus:—

'Please yer worship, I'm a lone, 'lorn widow, without a husband to protect my character, and I lives by working hard at the tub for the support of nine children, four living and five dead, please yer honour; and ever since that female at the bar come to live in our yard—which it was last Christmas twelvemonth—there's never been no peace whatsumever; for she is *that* scandalous that no one wouldn't condescend to have nothin' to say to her—which she owes her landlord nine weeks' rent, and is known to be no better than she should be, please yer worship! not that I wishes to have anything to say to her, nor any sich, if she'll have the goodness not to mildest me, after strikin' my daughter with a flat iron, and raisin' a bump on her head as big as a coker-nut, which her back-comb was driv' right into—and all because the pump at the top of the yard, as is common to all alike, and mostly to them as pays their way—which the poor child happened to splash her ladyship by accident, as I have nine witnesses to prove upon their Bible-oaths—and the nasty millishious wretch threw a whole bucketful over the poor girl, as is just left the hospital with a fit of rhoomatics in her head; and I, bein' the only mother of the child, couldn't stand by and see it done, and no sooner was the word said than she struck me here, yer worship, and kicked me here, and scratched me here, and bit a piece out of my gown, which the flesh is gone, as I've brought to show the court; and she tore my new bonnet, as cost six and sixpence last Tuesday week, into shreds and patches (crying), which if she'll pay the money, your worship (softening), I've no desire to punish the woman, for the sake of her poor children—altho' she has been six times to this court for assaults and battery, which is a place as I never set eyes on afore this day—my character being well known in the neighbourhood as a hard-working industrious woman (sobbing bitterly), which the police can prove.'

When a woman of this sort comes to tears, there is hope of speedy relief for the court, while the magistrate, by simply listening to the illegal narrative, is enabled to grasp the entire 'merits' of the case, *pro* and *con*. He sees that the only object of the complainant is to recover the price of her bonnet; and as the defendant has no objection to pay the money, now that she has 'had her spite out,' the quarrel is adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties, without examining any of the sixteen witnesses in attendance, all of whom, fraternizing with complainant and defendant, repair to the

nearest tavern to 'finish up the afternoon.'

Then there are the cases of 'distress.' Real, helpless poverty hides its rags, and shudders at the bare thought of publicity; but your idle ne'er-do-well goes straight to the magistrate without a blush; and the benevolent 'A. B. C.'s' and 'X. Y. Z.'s, who contribute so liberally to the poor-boxes of the London police courts, and 'respectfully request acknowledgments in the "Times,"' little imagine to what extent they are responsible for the affliction daily befalling their fellow-creatures.

THE OLD THIEF CONVICTED BY THE YOUNG WITNESS.

Here is a forlorn-looking Irishman, accompanied by his wife and two children, found begging within the very precincts of the court; and the woman (usually the 'spokesman'), tells a doleful story about their having scraped their earnings together to join a wealthy brother at the diggings, and being robbed of every farthing in a lodging-house near the docks the night before the vessel started—necessitating their return, penniless and barefooted, to Cork. The woman is affected to invisible tears; the man wipes his unmoistened eye; and the well-drilled children—boy and girl—roar a chorus of assent. There is a

benevolently-disposed, bald-headed old gentleman in the body of the court, who thinks it perfectly monstrous that the magistrate can listen so dispassionately to such a tale of woe, or hesitate for a moment to empty the contents of the imaginary poor-box into the unhappy woman's lap. His indignation is increased when he hears the man and his wretched offspring ordered 'out of court,' in order that they may be examined separately as to the details of their calamity.

'Now, my good woman, that's your husband, is it?'

'Yes, please your honour, and a honest, hard-working——'

'Never mind that. When were you married to him?'

'When, yer honour? Well, about twelve years ago; and I——'

'Where did the marriage take place?'

'Did yer say where, sir? Yes, sir, I think it was in Tipperary, yer honour; and hard work it was to get the money for the diggings——'

'What is your husband's name?'

'His name, yer honour? Macarthy, yer honour.'

'What was your name before you were married to him?'

'Cromartie, yer honour.'

'Are these your only children in twelve years?'

'Well, yer honour, they're the only darlings left to us by the marcy of Providence; or there would have been five, but for the three that was taken from us with the typhus; and a trouble it was to us till we rais'd the money for the diggings——'

'Call in the man.'

He is placed by the gaoler at the opposite end of the dock.

'What's your name, my man?'

'Kelly, yer honour.'

'Oh, indeed! I thought it was Macarthy.'

THE GENTLEMAN WHO TELLS THE MAGISTRATE HE DINED AT GREENWICH YESTERDAY.

'So it is, yer honour; Kelly Macarthy. I didn't know it was me other name ye were axing fir.'

'And so this woman is your wife, is she?'

'Yes, yer honour; and a hard-working, industrious——'

'Wait a bit. What was her name before you were married?'

'Well, yer honour, I hardly remember, for it was a long time ago——'

'A long time ago!'

'Not exactly that; I meant about seven years ago; and it's a long time to remember a name that yer've no further use for——'

'Oh! you've been married seven years, then?'

'About that, your honour—to the best of my recollection; bit if you ax me wife, she'll tell yer right, yer honour.'

'Where were you married?'

'I'm not sure, yer honour, for I've a bad memory; but if you ax me wife——'

'Surely you remember where you were married?'

'Well, then, I think it was Dublin, to the best of my belafe——'

'Then, if your wife said Cork——'

'Oh, certainly; Cork it was, yer honour.'

'It so happens, then, that she did not say Cork. Come, sir, how many children have you? Perhaps you can remember *that*?'

'There's the two darlings in court here to-day, yer honour.'

'Oh, but haven't you *lost* some children?'

The woman holds up three fingers, and makes a secret sign across the dock.

'Plaise, yer honour, I didn't think of the three that died with the measles——'

'But how many have you had?'

The man looks dismayed, and the woman holds up five fingers. The man mistakes her meaning.

'Well, I never thought to men-

tion the five we have in service, for they're no sort of trouble to us, and earning the honest penny for themselves; and if ever we get to the diggings——'

'Never mind the diggings. How many children do you make of it altogether?'

'Plaise yer honour, I'm no hand at calculation—I'm no scholar; but if you'll ax——'

'I think I can help you, sir. Two here to-day, three dead, and five in service—that makes ten. Ten children in seven years. Can you explain that, my man?'

'Well, yer honour, I'm no scholar; but if you'll ax my wife——'

'Stand down, sir. Call in the two

ACQUITTED.

children. Put the boy in the box (a dirty little urchin of about eight). Now, boy, look at me. Where's your father and mother? Don't look at these people; I know you don't belong to them. Come, tell the truth.' Boy (crying)—

'Please, sir, my father he was transported for life for picking up a handkercher in the Dials; and mother she sells oranges in the street.'

Here the gaoler observes—

'I know these children, your worship. They belong to Muddy Moll, as she is called. She hails mostly

SENT FOR TRIAL.

about the dark-arches, in the 'Delphi, and gets her living by letting these children out at sixpence a day to the beggars of London.'

'No, please sir, 'taint no such thing. Me and my sister Kate, we gets a honest respectable living, we do, by running after 'busses, and turning topsy-turvy for the 'musement of the gents outside, we do.'

By this time the magistrate comprehends the whole case. He commits the man and woman to three months, as rogues and vagabonds, and hands over the boy and girl to the tender mercies of the master of

the workhouse. Even the sympathetic stranger in court yields to the conviction that the magistrate was right, and he has already abandoned his intention to write to the 'Times' about 'man's inhumanity to man.'

But the magistrates, being mortal, have their little prejudices and weaknesses, too, and it is curious to note how these are consulted by the shrewder attorneys, police, prosecutors, and witnesses, who habitually come before them. I remember a knowing officer of the Mendicity Society, who called regularly at the police court every morning at ten, to ascertain which

of the magistrates was sitting—whether it was Mr. A., who never spared a beggar; or Mr. B., who never committed one,—a contingency which settled the nature and extent of his operations for the day. Ay, and you may have seen some of the more cunning of the professional beggars themselves, who have enjoyed perfect immunity on Mr. B.'s days, paying an early visit to the court, and regulating *their* operations too,—quitting the district altogether on Mr. A.'s days, for a moral certainty.

Then the inspector of the Z division, who has long since discovered

THE FREQUENT VISITOR.

Mr. B.'s antipathy to publicans, and Mr. A.'s invariable leniency towards the same class, will be sure to select the former to investigate his charge against the landlord of the 'Magpie and Stump,' for having sold Mary Watkins a 'leetle drop' of gin during the prohibited hours of Sunday—although she was *not* a *bonâ fide* traveller, and had no excuse to offer except that she was 'seized with the pinches in the left side,' and had prevailed on the humanity of the defendant to make her a present of the gin; which the barmaid and potman swore was a

free gift, but which the sergeant and the inspector declared they saw her pay for.

In the same way the cabman, having faith in the proverbial tendency of Mr. A. to crush the persecuted and immaculate fraternity to which he belongs, takes good care not to apply to *him* for a summons against the gent as only give sixpence for being druv two mile and a quarter on a wet night, but waits patiently for Mr. B.'s day of sitting; while, on the other hand, individuals who step forward 'on public grounds,' to expose the extortionate

demands and insolent demeanour of No. 104,632, will be careful to select Mr. A.'s day, in order that no mercy may be shown towards the ruthless offender.

Then Mr. A.'s notorious and extremely crotchety veneration for Acts of Parliament makes him the terror of every man who simply requires the magisterial signature to a formal affidavit; while Mr. B.'s utter contempt for Acts of Parliament in general makes him the special favourite of all prosecutors who are perfectly satisfied of the enormous delinquency of their servants, but who happen to have no legal evidence against them. On no account can you prevail on Mr. A. to 'stretch the law,' even where culpability is morally certain; while the precept of Mr. B. is, 'I am guided by the rules of common sense. If my decision fits the

Act, so much the better; if not, the Act is defective, and ought to be amended.'

Thus, as we have already shown, Mr. B. acquires a reputation for getting through a vast amount of business in an incredibly short space of time; while Mr. A. may be often found sitting on the bench two hours after the proper hour of closing the court, poring over the Acts of Parliament which are piled about him, in order that he may be able to give a strictly legal decision, 'according to the statute in that case made and provided,' upon the important question which has been debated before him by a couple of attorneys (not remarkable for their civility to each other), as to whether a man who has swallowed a bad half-crown can be said to have counterfeit money 'in his possession.'

G. G.

THE WASHING OF THE PILGRIMS' FEET.

A Scene at Rome.

I HAD vowed I would go to no ceremonies in Rome. Mock them I would not, respect them I could not: why should I see anything, sacred to others, that could but rouse ridicule in my mind? But the account given me of the washing of the pilgrims' feet, not at St. Peter's, but at Santa Marie dei Pelegrini—the description of the peasant toil-worn pilgrims made me absolve myself from that part of my vow and take steps to procure admittance to the spectacle.

Very difficult, every one said, to get a ticket, everybody was so anxious to go; and I had quite given up the idea, when late on Saturday evening—Easter Saturday—a note came from a friend to offer me the vacant place in their carriage and a spare ticket.

A little before nine o'clock we left *viâ* Condotti, and drove through the dark narrow streets, whither I knew not. Stopping at the darkest corner of a great church and a tall gloomy building, the hospital adjoining, up a slippery, dim, uncleanly stair, we stumbled, fearing to be too late, and passing through two small ante-rooms joined a procession of other ladies through a narrow passage made by wooden rails in the middle of the long, large, bare-walled chamber, where the supper was to be. On one side of us were long narrow tables, as yet uncovered, with attendant narrow empty benches. On the other a smaller space, occupied by a board, on which the materials for the supper were laid as they were brought in from another room by half a dozen or so of little women, in black silk dresses and red pinafores—ministering angels with very much the air of housekeepers and ladies' maids, but who were coronetted peeresses, countesses, and marchesas, every one of them.

A gradual pushing and shoving brought us to the door, and down a perilous dark stair, to the room where the ceremony was about to begin.

A large oblong stone chamber—not unlike a laundry—a raised stone seat with all round cocks of steaming water pouring into small tubs below three sides of it, and a wooden beam to keep separate the beholders and the performers in the impending sight.

By a side door the peasant women came slowly in one by one, seating themselves shyly on the stone seat and pulling off their thick woollen socks and strong shoes.

An old, old crone, wrinkled like a withered apple, laid her hands on her knees and stared indifferently before her. A shy, brown-faced girl, shamefaced, with the most beautiful wild blue eyes I ever saw, coarse white cloth over her head, and many beads round her throat, sat next her. A stout, stupid matron by her plunged her feet at once into the hot water to soak. They were mostly old women, none of them ragged, and few that did not look strong and hearty; but their faces wore, for the most part, that melancholy, weird look that is so southern and so poetic, and that means so little.

The red-aproned ladies had dropped on their knees before the tubs, and all was quiet, when a plump priest, in pink calico garments and a scarlet skull-cap, entered and placed himself in the middle of the long row of pilgrims. After a cheery word or two to the old dame on either side of him, the priest began, in a nasal monotone, a Latin prayer, instantly followed by the pilgrims. The ladies began to splash the water in the tubs and look around them and smile at their acquaintances.

A curious scene enough; deep grey shadows, a fitful yellow light resting on, here and there, a dark, wild face; harsh voices rising and falling in an unfamiliar tongue, and at once all the strange sense that these were unknown fellow-occupants of this dreamlike world, fellow-travellers to that eternal world to come—faces that I should never see again, and

that had' each its own fate and history, for good or evil, in this life and the next.

Small zeal, I thought, the ladies bestowed on their office. I should like to see English girls doing right heartily the scrubbing and sponging that they did not do at all. The prayers ended, each pilgrim drew on her socks and shoes; each lady placed the hand of her whose feet she had washed within her arm and led her from the room. The women slouched bashfully past us, and the ministering angels nodded and smiled to the friends they saw amongst our number, but seemed to take no heed of, or interest in, their companions.

We made our way, as speedily as might be, to the supper-room, while a new set of pilgrims, ladies, and spectators took our places.

Upstairs, the long tables were already covered and rows of sunburnt guests seated, waiting for grace to be said, more red pinafores flitted around with round bowls of salad and thick brown loaves, and with them were here and there stout beings in pink calico garments from the throat to the feet, whose grey moustaches relieved us from an otherwise painful uncertainty as to their sex. With glee I recognised my friend, Prince M——, as benign and better shaven than usual, amongst the pink dressing-gowns; and he told me that with sundry others he had finished washing the men's feet in a separate part of the hospital, and had come to help to keep order here.

A cheery sound now filled the long room, the salad, bread, fish, and wine made an ample supper in the eyes of such frugal, hungry folk as the Italian peasants; and talking, laughing, and whispering in groups they ate and drank. Some did not eat, but stuffed their portion into a leathern wallet or yellow kerchief for the morrow's use. Some helped their neighbours, pulling the shining lettuce leaves out of wooden bowls with yet browner fingers. Here and there a sad gloomy face looked out from the white head-gear, but there was many a flashing eye and happy countenance among them:

only one girl—so beautiful that her face haunts me still—looked so lonely and so sad that I tried to coax her to take her untouched food: she shook her head, and a great clear drop fell from her eyes: she would not even carry off her bread and wine, as did those who, dog like, were too shy to eat in public, but sat with locks of tawny hair on her shoulders and long slender hands clasped in her lap, a poem in herself. I wondered why she was sad, and composed a rapid romance for her, ending happily in the third volume.

Grace was said and a move made towards the sleeping-room, and now began a strange scene.

Wooden bars were again put up to keep a passage wide enough to admit two abreast to the doorway. Countess E—— stood at the exit to see that too many did not crowd into the dormitory at one time, and Marchese —— took up a position a few yards inside the room, to keep order in the procession as it passed from the tables. Within the sleeping-room a hymn, chanted by the lady attendants, was joined by the voices of the peasants, in turn, as they left the supper-room; not an unmelodious mingling of rough and cultivated tones in a slow yet glad cadence, but we only heard the sound at first, for they would not go quietly, and a trampling of heavy feet drowned all save their own noise.

Much to my amaze the frightened, grave women became bold, half fierce and wholly boisterous, elbowing, exclaiming, pushing, with flushed faces and muttered words—all strove to be first. So wildly did they push that at last the matron, little active Marchese ——, threw herself between two stout women, and with head, hands, and elbows fought till she had driven back the foremost in the *melée*, and had restored order in the procession.

'Curious folk,' Prince M—— said to me; 'they are at times so fierce in their dormitory that it is hard to manage them. Certain beds are special favourites, certain parts of the room are much esteemed, and they fight for these; also, those of one country or of one family are wild if they be not together at bed time.'

The Prince told me that in another section of the building the male pilgrims were tended, as were here the women, but that all through the year the Institution was open for the relief of all poor or wayfaring people; only, to merit the special privileges of Easter—the six days' food and lodging, the clean linen, and warm water—they must have journeyed sixty miles on foot unwashed; then for six days they may receive food and lodging, and on one of those days their feet are washed by the delicate hands of the high-born Lenten penitents of Rome.

The pilgrims spend their day in visiting shrines and churches, and on Easter day they throng the great place of St. Peter to receive the Papal blessing.

I was mistaken in my supposition that the pilgrims regarded themselves as favoured beings in being so treated; it appears they consider that the privilege is theirs to bestow, when they lend themselves to aid the good works of the fair penitents; the favour is all the other way: they think themselves very gracious in

allowing the Roman countesses and princesses to urge a claim on heaven by washing their feet; and there is great 'concurrence' among the Roman ladies for permission to do it, so much so, that the Holy Father had declared that no one should henceforth be eligible for the office who did not six times wash the feet in private before the public performance. My informant added, with a sly smile, that such an order naturally lessened the number of applicants considerably. The whole thing is so utterly apart from any English charity or good work, so thoroughly 'foreign' as we call it, that I could institute no comparison between it and any similar institution in our country; but I left the grey walls of Santa Marie dei Pellegrini with real regret that I could only have this one glimpse at the interesting countrywomen of this most poetic land, and that there was so small a likelihood of my ever revisiting a scene so novel and so far superior, from its absence of theatrical effect, to anything I had yet seen in the Holy City.

SITTING IT OUT.

THERE'S a charm about waltzing, which every one knows
Who has learnt how Terpsichore uses her toes,—
A charm which scarce fades as older one grows,
Unless gout has brought a disheart'ner;
As slipping one arm round a waist young and slender,
Your hold at once steady, respectful, and tender
(Though, out of the ball-room, such act might offend her),
You're off with your beautiful partner.

Yes! sweet is the waltz when the floor suits the foot;
And sweet is the music of Tinney and Coote;
And sweet—p'raps too sweet—is the champagne to boot
You together imbibe down at supper.
You wouldn't change places for crown or for mitre,
As, whirling still faster, you hear 'Hold me tighter!'
Your ball-room philosophy's probably lighter
Than e'en the Proverbial Tupper.

But still there's a charm more delightful than dancing,
Be it square dance or round, be it gliding or prancing;
Light music and flowers all join in enhancing
The pleasure of 'Sitting it out.'

Say the Turks, 'This is work our slave girls do for us.'
 I like dancing, so do not quite join in the chorus;
 But, depend on it, 'Ridet ab angulo'—Horace
 Knew what he was singing about.

Where the best balls are given there's always a spot—
 Whether greenhouse or staircase, boudoir or what-not—
 Where the light is subdued, and the air is less hot;
 And this is the corner to make for.
 Thither go, when mamma down to supper has gone,
 When a very long waltz or the Lancers are on;
 There you'll find, as you sit 'mid the flowers alone,
 A dream that's worth keeping awake for.

That sweet thing in *tulle*, sitting there by your side,
 With her bouquet and wreath, looks almost like a bride;
 And you fancy—for fancy takes many a stride—
 You are struck at the heart, not to say bit:
 Though to meet her again you may ne'er have the chance,
 Though you think of the scene as forgotten romance,
 Still, 'Sitting it out' with that girl at that dance,
 'Olim meminisse juvabit.'

UP AND DOWN THE LONDON STREETS.

BY MARK LEMON.

CHAPTER X.

PICCADILLY originally was not one-fourth its present length, extending only to Sackville Street, and appears in the rate-books of St. Martin's for the first time in 1673. The history of Piccadilly may be read in the names of its streets. From Sackville Street to Burlington Street was originally called Portugal Street, after Charles II.'s Queen; and all beyond 'The Great Bath Road,' or 'The Way to Reading.' As late as 1734, Piccadilly, from Devonshire House, formerly Berkeley House, to Hyde Park Corner, was occupied by the shops and stoneyards of statuary, and cottages, as shown in engravings of the time. The road was unpaved, and coaches were frequently overturned. Remembering what a family coach was, one wonders how they managed to get them up again. Lord Clarendon's house, which he built at great cost during a time of great public calamity [Burnet], excited the people, who cut down, says Pepys, the trees before the house, and broke the windows, and set up

or painted a gibbet on his gates, and these words writ:

'Three sights to be seen—
 Dunkirk, Tangier, and a barren queen.'

The populace called it Dunkirk House, believing that Clarendon had feathered his nest out of the sale of Dunkirk. After Clarendon's flight and death the house was sold to the Earl of Albermarle, who again sold it to Sir Thomas Bond, of Peckham. Two Corinthian pillars at the Three Kings' Gateway (formerly No. 75) are believed to have belonged to Clarendon House. Burlington House was named after its builder; the Gardens were called the Ten Acres. Devonshire House was the site of Berkeley House, built about 1665, on the site of Hay Hill Farm. On Hay Hill the head of Wyatt was set upon a gallows, and the late Duke of York and the Prince of Wales were stopped and robbed there. Coventry House was built on the site of an old inn, and sold by Sir Hugh Hemlock (1704) for 10,000 guineas to the Earl of Coventry.

More notabilities than we have space to enumerate, or you patience to read about, have occupied Piccadilly. John Evelyn lived on the east side of Dover Street, and where he 'had been sometimes so cheerful and sometimes so sad' with Chancellor Hyde. On the west side lived Arbuthnot, the friend of Pope, and Swift, Gay, and Prior all had met here, and perhaps concocted the 'Beggar's Opera' for Manager Rich—a work that was said to have made 'Rich Gay and Gay Rich.*' From No. 30 Sir Francis Burdett was taken to the Tower—the street filled with the Horse Guards—the

officers scaled the windows, and found Sir Francis instructing his son in *Magna Charta*. At the old Pulteney Hotel stayed the Emperor of Russia in 1814, and there the Princess Charlotte was introduced to Prince Leopold. At No. 23 lived Lord Nelson's Lady Hamilton, and opposite the opening into the Park the Duke of Queensberry, or 'Old Q,' as he was called. He was a thin, withered old man with one eye, and used on fine days to sit on his balcony, which was nearly level with the street, winking at all the females who passed. We have often seen Old Q., as Leigh Hunt describes

OLD VIEW OF PICCADILLY. From Hyde Park Corner Turnpike.

* It was Dean Swift who first suggested the idea of the 'Beggar's Opera,' by observing what an odd pretty sort of thing a Newgate pastoral might make. 'Gay,' says Pope, 'was inclined to try at such a thing for some time; but afterwards thought it would be better to write a comedy on the same plan. This was what gave rise to the "Beggar's Opera." He began on it, and when first he mentioned it to Swift, the doctor did not like the project. As he carried it on, he showed what he wrote to both of us; and we, now and then, gave a correction or a word or two of advice, but it was wholly of his own writing. When it was done, neither of us thought it would succeed. We showed it to Congreve,

who, after reading it over, said, "It would either take greatly, or be damned confoundedly." We were all, at the first night of it, in great uncertainty of the event, till we were very much encouraged by our hearing the Duke of Argyle, who sat in the next box to us, say, "It will do,—it must do. I see it in the eyes of them." This was a good while before the first act was over, and so gave us ease soon; for the duke (beside his own good taste) has as particular a knack as any one living in discovering the taste of the public. He was quite right in this as usual; the good nature of the audience appeared stronger and stronger in every act, and ended in a clamour of applause.

him, 'sunning himself in Hunca-munca's eyes,' and wondered at the longevity of his dissipation and the prosperity of his wickedness. His dying bed was covered with billet-doux addressed to the 'sweet eyes of his money-box.' At the corner of Whitehorse Street Sir Walter Scott used to stay when in town; and Lord Byron brought Lady Byron when they were married to No. 139. There was a Whitehorse Cellar as

early as 1720, and the mail coaches were a sight worth seeing in our young days starting on their course to the West. The White Bear existed in 1685, and the Hercules Pillars, where Squire Western stopped when in pursuit of Tom Jones, and where the brave old Marquis of Granby spent many a pleasant hour, were close to Apsley House.

St. James's Market and Market

HOUSE OF SIR ISAAC NEWTON, NEAR LEICESTER SQUARE, LONDON.

Street are contiguous to Piccadilly. Over a room of the Market House, Richard Baxter, the celebrated Non-conformist, used to preach. On the first occasion, the main beam of the building cracked with the weight of his congregation. And here, behind the bar of the Mitre, Farquhar found the celebrated Mrs. Oldfield, then only sixteen, rehearsing Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Scornful Lady.' In Market Street lived George III.'s fair Quakeress, Hannah Lightfoot.

Hard by, in Jermyn Street, lived many distinguished people—the great Marlborough, when Colonel Churchill; La Belle Stuart, who figured as the Britannia of our old coinage; Sir Isaac Newton, and Secretary Craggs, the friend of Pope and Addison; and at the St. James's Hotel was the last lodging in London of Sir Walter Scott. 'He lay here three weeks, either in a stupor or a waking dream,' says Mr. Cunningham, and when he left, and the

assembled populace saw the vacant eye and prostrate figure of the illustrious poet, there was not a covered head, and hardly a dry eye.'

Let us return to Leicester Fields, or Leicester Square—now surrendered to our friendly French invaders. It has fallen sadly from its high estate since the Earl of Leicester built Leicester House about Charles I.'s time, and paid 3*l.* for Lammas dues to St. Martin's parish for house and gardens, the field before the house, and Swan Close. His lordship used to let his mansion to people of fashion; and here died the unfortunate Queen of Bohemia.

A great many modern Bohemians are still to be found in that neighbourhood. Colbert, the French ambassador, and other notabilities, lived here. Pennant called it 'Pouting Place,' as the Prince of Wales, afterwards George II., bought it when he quarrelled with his father; and here the hero of Culloden was born. When George II. quarrelled with his son, Prince Frederick, he came also to Pouting Place; and, to annoy the king, had 'Cato' played, the future George III. enacting Portius. The Duke of Gloucester also lived here.

In 'the Fields,' when converted

HOGARTH'S HOUSE, LEICESTER SQUARE, LONDON.

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into a square, Hogarth (1764) resided at the sign of the Golden Head, made by himself out of pieces of cork glued together and painted. In the enclosure of the square he was often seen in his scarlet roquelaure and cocked hat. John Hunter's Museum was next door to the house Hogarth had occupied, and Sir Joshua Reynolds lived at No. 47.

New Street, Covent Garden, was fashionably inhabited in Charles II.'s time, and Vandyke's love, the Countess of Chesterfield, lived there. At the Pine Apple, Dr. Johnson dined very well for 8*d.*—a cut of

meat 6*d.*, bread 1*d.*, waiter 1*d.*, which gratuity 'those who paid a shilling and had worse, did not give'—so the Doctor was as well served as they. And there, in King Street, lived Lenthall, the Speaker, in the time of the Commonwealth; and Dr. Arne and his sister, Mrs. Colley Cibber, were born there; as was Quin, the actor. Nicholas Rowe, the poet, died there; and Garrick lived there in 1745.

It was not until Henry VIII.'s time that any salads, carrots, cabbage, or other edible roots were produced in England. (Butler.) Beneath a small grotto of trees, under

GEORGE PEABODY.

(WITH A PORTRAIT.)

WE mourned the old chivalric times,
 Their virtues, with their glories, dead—
 Life stricken wholly from romance—

‘And what is left to us?’ we said :
 Up through the land the murmur rose :
 ‘Oh for the days that are no more,
 When love of God wrought love of man,
 And all were human to the core !

‘The great Arthurian days we mourn,
 And all the lapsing years that wrought
 Change after change, yet evermore
 Some varying phase of splendour caught ;
 Still noble deeds, still gentle lives,
 Till every knightly heart grew cold,
 And Valour’s sunset-radiance lit
 The tourney of the Cloth of Gold.

‘The poetry of earth is dead :*
 What lesser grief should we bemoan,
 With Science in the place of Faith,
 With quicken’d brains and hearts of stone ?
 Our noblest triumphs mock our skill,
 We link the Continents in vain—
 It only tends to sordid ends,
 And whets the appetite for gain.’

So from our lips remonstrance fell,
 When through the land a rumour went,—
 ‘The old heroic fire revives—
 Its pulsing fervour is not spent !
 The record of the glowing past
 Shows in its dim and doubtful page
 No deed like that which greets the eyes
 Of this debased, prosaic age.

‘For, lo ! a Queen of sovereign sway,
 Of zoneless empire, quits her throne,
 Stooping to welcome one who comes
 A stranger, nameless and unknown :
 No comely youth in knightly guise
 Shining at ruffled beauty’s knees—
 A silver’d head, a homely form—
 No more the queenly woman sees.

* ‘The poetry of earth is never dead.’—KEATS.

' No more ; but in her heart there glows
The memory of a noble deed,
Of succour to her people lent,
Of princely aid in sorest need.
And gracious is her tearful smile
As forth she thrusts a trembling hand,
And bids him in her name receive
The homage of her grateful land.'

Homage to Goodness ! Queenly meed
Of generous thanks to simple Worth !
Thus does the old chivalric soul
Survive in us of later birth ;
Nor doubt its promptings in the heart
Of him,—his nation's noblest son,—
The largesse of whose liberal hand
A sovereign's thanks has rightly won.

Never did truer beauty clothe
The radiant limbs of courtly knight,
Than clothes that brow serenely smooth,
And fills those eyes with gentle light.
To latest times that homely form,
And that familiar, kindly face,
The holier memories of men
Will with a tender beauty grace.

Where'er that honoured name is heard
The tears will gleam in woman's eyes ;
The hearts of men will stir and creep,
And blessings to their lips will rise.
Though Science join'd the sunder'd worlds,
It needed yet what he has done,—
A noble action, meekly wrought,
Has knit the hearts of both in one.

Yes, and as, far above the glow,
When all the West is fierce with flame,
A faint star brightens to the night,
Deep'ning about it—so his fame,
Surviving all the transient bloom
That makes the passing present bright,
Will shine, and still resplendent shine,
An orb of ever-gathering light. S.

LEEDS AND ITS MERCHANTS.

JOHN HARRISON, OF LEEDS.

LEEEDS was in existence more than a thousand years before it attained much commercial notoriety. Built on or near the site of an old Roman encampment, it was a fortified town in the days of Bede. Its strength made it a special object of attack at the time of the Norman Conquest, and thereafter, for several generations, the Paganel and their descendants were its feudal lords. Maurice de Gaunt, or Paganel, the last of these, in 1208, gave to its burgesses a charter of freedom, worthily robbing himself of much of his authority in order that the welfare of the town might be promoted. Then, however, and for some centuries ensuing, Leeds was small and uninfluential; steadily advancing as a market for wool and sheepskins, but inferior to some others of the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire towns to which the Hull and Boston merchants resorted for those staples of trade with the continental cities. In ancient Leeds there were few elements of prosperity; but as soon as Lancashire and Yorkshire became great fields of manufacturing energy, Leeds was found to be the fittest centre for its eastern half,

having Hull for its port, just as Manchester helped on, and was helped by, the commercial advancement of Liverpool. Manchester and Leeds have grown together, taking the places, as great manufacturing resorts, of the older towns of Bristol and Norwich. About contemporary with Humphrey Chetham, the great benefactor of Manchester, was Sir John Saville, who, in 1626, obtained from Charles I. a charter of incorporation for his native town, and was thereupon appointed its first mayor or alderman. Sir John Saville's arms, in which a sheep, the most prominent object, fitly indicated its subsequent prosperity as a seat of woollen manufacture, became the arms of Leeds, and from his time the annals of the town show a notable succession of merchants and manufacturers.

Most famous among them all was excellent John Harrison, who was born in 1579, and died in 1656. His father, also a John Harrison, was a rich merchant before him, so prosperous and wealthy, that the son had little need to earn more money, and wisely spent his fortune in doing all the good that lay in his power.

When he was seven years old, it was reported he saw a poor boy in the streets, without coat or shoes, and, straightway taking off his own coat, threw it over the lad's shoulders. When he was seventy, and himself if not in actual poverty much poorer than he formerly had been, carping lookers-on declared that he had brought his misfortunes on himself by the reckless ways in which all through life he had shown his charitable disposition. Having bought Rockley Hall, in the Lower-head Row, soon after inheriting his father's fortune, his first step was to set apart its two largest rooms as storehouses for food and clothing to be given to the poor. In 1626, he performed the functions of mayor of Leeds, as deputy of Sir John Saville, and twice afterwards he filled the office in his own name. During his second mayoralty, in 1634, St. John's Church, begun three years earlier, and built at his own expense, was completed. He had already set up a new and much more commodious building for the old Leeds Grammar School, founded seventy years before; and in 1653 he established and endowed, near to St. John's Church, a hospital for poor widows. About this time, too, he built himself a house in Briggate, — 'a good old-fashioned house, with a quadrangular court in the midst,' says the old historian, who adds, that 'it has one thing very peculiar in it, namely, holes, or passages, cut in the doors or ceilings for the free passage of cats, for which animals he seems to have had as great an affection as another eminent benefactor, Sir Richard Whittington.' Other doubtful anecdotes, akin to some other Whittington traditions, are recorded of him. 'When Charles I., then in the hands of the Scots, was brought to Leeds,' it is said, 'access to his person was not, of course, easily obtained, but Mr. Harrison desired permission to present his Majesty with a tankard of excellent ale, which he brought in his hand. In this the guards could see no treachery, and they accordingly admitted him; but the King, on opening the lid, found that, instead of the expected beverage, the

vessel was filled with broad pieces. These he contrived to hide with great dexterity, and his loyal benefactor was dismissed with more gratitude than thanks.' Honest Harrison could not follow the tide of progress that brought about the Commonwealth, and his last years were made unhappy by the failure of the royalist cause. The dejection of many of his old friends was a great grief to him. 'The time was when you called me patron, and remembered me in your prayers, public and private,' he said, in a letter to the incumbent of St. John's Church, on which, with its school-house, and associated charities, he had spent at least 6000*l.*; 'but now patrons are out of date, and churches may be little barns; to pray for any is popish and prelatie. The time was when I suffered for you under the royal party more than you will suffer for me under the parliament; but, oh, the times! my suffering for you is made the apology to deter you from so much as visiting me, being under the hatches; a poor conclusion grounded on weak premises. The time was when all I could do for you was too little; but now the least done for me is too much.' Posterity, however, has remembered John Harrison's good actions, and he is rightly honoured as the foremost of all the benefactors of Leeds.

The greatest boon conferred by Harrison on the commerce of Leeds was his erection, in Kirkgate, of 'a stately cross, for convenience of the market.' Thither assembled, during many subsequent generations, the wool producers and wool-staplers, the clothiers and cloth merchants of Leeds. Among the most famous of them were John and Philip Thoresby, brothers, and both of them aldermen of the borough soon after its incorporation, the eldest of whom was grandfather of Ralph Thoresby, the antiquarian; William Milner, who was mayor of Leeds in 1697, and father of the William Milner on whom Queen Anne conferred a baronetcy, and several Denisons and Sykeses.

The Sykeses were conspicuous among the merchants of Leeds

during more than two centuries. A William Sykes, son of Richard Sykes, of Sykes' Dyke, near Carlisle, settled in Leeds as a clothier in the sixteenth century, and his grandson Richard, wealthy enough to buy the manor of Leeds from the Crown in 1625, was chief alderman of the town for the first eighteen years of its incorporation. Dying in 1645, he left vast estates to each of his four sons, and 10,000*l.* to each of his four daughters, from whom four knights' and baronets' families were descended. Another of the family was Daniel Sykes, who was born in 1632, and died in 1693. He was mayor of Hull, and for many years the greatest merchant therein. He followed the Baltic trade, and it is recorded of him that at one time, during a grievous famine in Sweden, he freighted several vessels with provisions, and despatched them for gratuitous distribution among the starving people. In return for that noble act, the Swedish Government granted him a lease of iron mines, whence his sons and grandsons drew immense wealth. The house of Joseph Sykes, Son, and Company, for more than thirty years almost monopolized the trade in Swedish iron. Joseph, old Daniel Sykes's grandson, was father of another and more famous Daniel Sykes. He was bred a lawyer, and legal pursuits partly occupied him all through life; but the state of his health led him to find in commerce his chief employment, and he became another famous merchant both in Leeds and in Hull, joining the two callings, and adding to them further work as a zealous politician in an unusual way. For nearly forty years he was Recorder for Hull. He also served it, from 1820 to 1830, as member of Parliament. In 1830 he was elected for Beverley, and he was only prevented by failing health from succeeding Lord Brougham as representative of Yorkshire in 1832. In that year he died, having won the praises of his fellows, as a good and honest man, as a wise and generous statesman, and, above all, as a merchant 'thoroughly versed both in the details and in the principles of commerce, attached to the utmost free-

dom of industry, so independent and disinterested, that he sacrificed the representation of Hull because he would not support the claims of the shipping interests to a reimposition of the old restrictions on navigation, favourable to freedom of trade in corn and freedom of trade to the East: a cool, clear-headed, patient man of business, and of the most inflexible integrity and unstained purity of character.'

All these Sykeses were of one stock, with a pedigree plainly defined. It is not clear whether the many Denisons contemporary with them were all of common parentage or members of several distinct families. Two branches, between whom no kinship can be traced, are specially notable. One sprang from a William Denison, clothier and merchant, who was in business at North Town End, near the beginning of the eighteenth century. Of his two sons, the younger, Sir Thomas Denison, was a famous lawyer and King's Bench judge. The elder, William, carried on his father's trade. He was very rich, very generous to the poor, and somewhat eccentric. Four times, between 1754 and 1758, he was elected mayor of Leeds, but refused to enter upon the duties of the office, so that fresh mayors had to be chosen. In the last year the insulted corporation brought an action against him for this persistent rejection of their proffered honour, and he at length agreed to take the title of Mayor on condition that all the business should be done by his brother. In 1779 he was High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, in which county he had some time before bought the manor of Ossington. That estate, with half a million of money, he left to his eldest son, John, who greatly increased the fund before making room for another John. John Denison, the younger, was member of Parliament for Chichester, and afterwards for Malton. A daughter of his first wife married Charles Manners Sutton, Speaker of the House of Commons, and afterwards Lord Canterbury. Through a second wife he had several sons, one of them the Bishop of Salisbury, who died in 1854; another, the pre-

sent Governor-General of Madras, while the eldest has been Speaker of the House of Commons since 1857.

Another of the Denisons, named Joseph, was born at Leeds in 1726. His parents were too poor, it is said, to be able to teach him even to read. But he managed to scrape together a little knowledge by his own energy, and then he applied that energy to the making of a great fortune. He ran away from Leeds to London, just in time to obtain a situation in the counting-house of John Dillon, of St. Mary Axe. By some means or other, he soon became a partner, and then sole proprietor of the business, his old master at last becoming his clerk. 'By unabated industry and the most rigid frugality, he worked himself,' we are told, 'into very high credit and an increasing fortune.' He was about fifty when, in 1775, the old Heywoods of Liverpool established their bank, and found it expedient to employ him as their London agent. Here, again, he steadily pushed himself into the topmost place, bequeathing, in 1806, the senior partnership in the house of Denison, Heywood, and Company, besides more than a million in lands or money, to his son, William Joseph Denison, many years member of parliament for Surrey, Sheriff of Yorkshire in 1808, and uncle of the first Lord Londesborough. When he died he was worth between two and three million pounds.

Most of the money-making Denisons left Leeds to spend or hoard their wealth elsewhere. The true merchant-patriots of a town are those who use the influence that it brings them for its own advancement; and such pre-eminently were Benjamin Gott and John Marshall, the greatest merchants of Leeds during the last twenty years of the eighteenth century and the first twenty of the nineteenth. Their lives were very nearly contemporaneous, and they were associates in many good and charitable works; but in business matters they held different courses. The one gave new life to the old woollen trade of the town; the other gave it another staple source of wealth, by making it a great centre of linen manufacture.

All the early prosperity of Leeds, as we have already observed, sprung from its trade in woollen goods; yet in the middle of the seventeenth century, shortly before the birth of Benjamin Gott, this trade was still in its infancy. Leeds itself was, in comparison with its present condition, an insignificant town, hardly longer than the length of Briggate, stretching westward no further than Trinity Church, and with Saint Peter's Church for almost its eastern limit. Saint John's Church, with the Free Grammar School and Harrison's Almshouses adjoining, formed its modern boundary; and all the town was contained on the northern side of the Aire. The old Norman bridge at the foot of Briggate still sufficed for the weekly cloth-market; the traders of the town and the country manufacturers being called together by a bell rung in the quaint bridge-chapel, and the merchants of Hull, Boston, and similar places, coming there to buy and carry down the cloths by way of the river. By 1758, however, the trade had outgrown that old-fashioned mart, and accordingly, a commodious building, now known as the Mixed Cloth Hall, was set up a little to the west of Trinity Church. This structure, thought preposterously large at the time of its erection, formed a quadrangle three hundred and sixty-four feet long, and a hundred and ninety-two feet broad, with an inner court measuring three hundred and thirty feet, by ninety-six. It was accessible by seven doors, was lighted by a hundred and sixty-seven windows, and was large enough, it was reckoned, to hold 109,200*l.*'s worth of cloth at a time. Within seventeen years from its opening, it was found necessary to build another meeting-place. The White Cloth-Hall, between Briggate and Saint Peter's Church, was completed in 1775; and within a few years, nine similar structures were opened in all the trading towns of the West Riding of Yorkshire. All grew with the growth of Leeds. In 1775, Leeds contained 17,117 inhabitants. By 1801 the population had increased to 30,699: in 1821 it

amounted to 83,746; and in 1865 it was estimated at 224,025.

One of the causes of that rapid growth was the opening of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, begun in 1767, and steadily but slowly continued down to its completion in 1816. As early as 1774, however, twenty miles of the canal, extending from Bingley to Bradford, were ready for use, and presented, according to the judgment of contemporaries, 'the noblest works of the kind that perhaps are to be found in the universe, namely, a five-fold, a three-fold, a two-fold, and a single lock, making together a fall of a hundred and twenty feet; a large aqueduct-bridge, of seven arches, over the River Aire, and an aqueduct on a large embankment over Shipley Valley.' There certainly was need of improvement in the ways of traffic. Down to 1753, the best roads between Leeds and the neighbouring towns were narrow lanes, with just room enough for the old-fashioned waggons that were used for burdens too heavy for conveyance in the usual way, on the backs of single horses. On these pack-horses the raw wool and roughly-made cloths were generally carried by the small dealers, who rode in front of their goods. It was slow travelling at best, rendered very dangerous by the bad state of the dark and cheerless roads, and the constant risk of attack by highwaymen.

Most of the wool was made into cloth by small manufacturers scattered about the country, and lodged in the different towns and villages of the West Riding. These manufacturers brought or sent their goods to the markets of such places as Leeds, Bradford, or Wakefield, there either to be sold at once to the wholesale merchants from other parts of England or from foreign countries, or to be collected by the wool-staplers and reserved for subsequent distribution. There were no manufactures conducted on the extensive scale now common, and necessary to the more finished workmanship of modern times, until Benjamin Gott set the fashion.

This estimable man was born on

the 24th of June, 1762, at Leeds, where his father, contemporary with Brindley, and, like him, originally a common working man, rose to some distinction as a civil engineer. The son was put to school at Bingley, and then placed as a clerk in the house of Wormald and Fountain, who carried on a respectable trade as wool-dealers and manufacturers of the sort then common in Leeds. Showing aptitude for the business, he was soon taken into partnership by his employers, and upon their death or retirement he became sole master of the establishment.

His energy, prudence, and reasonable philanthropy, soon made it the largest of the kind in Leeds, and insured for him so much prosperity that in due time he came to be the recognized head of the woollen trade in Yorkshire. From first to last he aimed, above all things, at preserving the independence of the small dealers and manufacturers. Full of sympathy for the great body of the people, he watched with jealous eye the development of huge factories like those of the Peels, at Bury and Tamworth, and the Monteiths, at Blantyre and Dalmarnock. He saw that this was an inevitable tendency of modern commerce; he yielded to it himself, and became proprietor of a monster factory of his own; but he felt that this growth of trade, if, on the one hand, it was very helpful to the lower classes, was likely, on the other, to inflict upon them a serious injury. He considered that the men who were only fit to be the servants of others, could not possibly be hurt, would very likely be benefited by having employment in large, instead of small establishments. But he was very loth to damage the position of the multitudes of insignificant manufacturers, who honourably preferred to be their own masters, and to follow the calling inherited from their fathers, only aided by their own sons and daughters, or perhaps by one or two apprentices, who hoped in time to be also independent cloth-makers. With all such men Benjamin Gott was anxious to trade in their own way. He sought them out, bought their produce from them

on equitable terms, made every allowance for any defects in its character that were due to the incompleteness of the machinery with which they were forced to be content, and encouraged them to go on in their old ways, only adapting those ways to the demands of modern commerce for cheap and well-made goods.

With that excellent purpose he did his utmost to carry on the smaller sorts of business that had characterized his house when he first became a partner in it. He was not, however, content with that. Reasonably mindful of his own interests, as well as with the view of promoting the welfare of his town and trade, he also became a manufacturer on a large scale. His factory at Armley was, towards the end of the eighteenth century, so extensive, that his workmen's wages amounted to 1000*l.* a week—a small sum in the eyes of many great manufacturers of the present day, but very large indeed if taken as a measure of the extent of an employer's business seventy years ago.*

* In 1841, Mr. William Chambers visited the establishment of Messrs. Gott and Sons, and penned this account of his visit:—
'To observe the first step in the operation, we were conducted from the ground level to the summit of one of the large structures, by means of a scaffold, which is pulled up a kind of well in the building. On opening a door below, we see a low table before us; and stepping upon it, and pulling a rope to set the machinery in motion, we are immediately carried upwards with great steadiness. The table may be stopped at any floor in passing, and it is lowered with equal facility. Steam-power is of course the mover of this, as well as of all the other mechanical contrivances in the house. By means, therefore, of this stair-saving process, which is now common in all large factories, we were speedily landed on the uppermost floor, and there followed the wool in all its subsequent stages—dyeing, spinning, weaving by power-loom, fulling, dressing, clipping of surface, drying, pressing, and packing. Steam is employed throughout; it boils the great tin caldrons in which the dyeing is effected, lifts the enormous mallets which are employed in fulling, turns the cylinders to which the teasles are applied for raising the mass, dries the cloth on tenter-racks—

At that time wool and worsted were worked exclusively by hand; neither Hargreaves' jenny nor Crompton's mule, nor any of the other inventions that had already caused wonderful improvement in cotton manufacture, having been as yet adapted to woollen fibre. The wool was first sorted, and then combed or carded by the manual labour of

fixed tier above tier from bottom to top of a building, works the hydraulic presses, packs the bales, and, in short, is the universal agent of power and heat; on every hand saving labour, time, and expense, and, therefore, giving the manufacturer that economical command of means which places him at such advantage over less favoured competitors. As many as eleven hundred persons have been employed at one time in this large concern; but trade being at present in a depressed state in Leeds—much to the distress of the operatives as well as the mill proprietors—no more than about seven hundred are employed. Even this, however, is a large number; and a stranger would naturally expect to observe some degree of confusion and slovenliness where so many workmen were brought into close contact, but he would be pleasingly disappointed. Two stupendous steam-engines, the prime movers of the works, are individually lodged in private apartments, as clean and well-painted as a gentleman's drawing-room, and all parts shine with the most brilliant polish. Throughout the different large buildings containing the workmen, you do not hear a word spoken. Every individual is as busy as a bee at his own peculiar work; no such thing as straggling out and in is observable, and the whole system seems perfect in point of concentrated industry and organization. The raw material employed is in a great measure the fine Saxony wool, and the purchase and importation of this article forms one of the principal professions in the district. An attempt was at one time made on the part of the wool-growers of Burton to exclude Saxony wool from our markets; but it was successfully shown by Mr. Gott, and other gentlemen, in their evidence before Parliament, that if it were done, the ruin of the British wool-trade would follow, for it was only by the use and admixture of Saxony wool that our manufacturers could compete with continental fabrics. By pursuing the enlightened recommendations of these gentlemen, and admitting Saxony wool, the producers of wool in our own country at all times command a ready and profitable market among the wool-staplers of England.'—*Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, vol. x., p. 353.

men and boys, whose average wages amounted to about twelve shillings a week; then it was spun, generally by women and girls, whose wages varied from eighteen pence to half-a-crown a week. It was finally submitted to the hand-loom weaver, who, with hard work, could rarely earn more than ten shillings a week. In 1858, the average wages of the men employed in the Leeds woollen factory amounted to twenty-two shillings a week, while boys received about six and eight pence, and women and girls more or less than eight shillings. Thus the labourers' rate of pay has been more than doubled, notwithstanding the very great reduction in the price of the goods produced by them, through the introduction of machinery into the woollen manufactures, begun by Gott and his associates, and greatly extended in recent years by younger men, like David Cooper. In 1856, the Leeds clothing district, containing about half the woollen trade of Yorkshire, and more than a fourth of that of all Great Britain, was occupied by 340 manufacturers, who gave employment to 23,328 operatives, besides using 1005 gigs, 2344 power-looms, and 423,482 spindles worked by steam-power equal to the force of 7810 horses.

And while the woollen trade has been thus progressing in Leeds, under the encouragement of men like Benjamin Gott, the town has become the home of another wealth-producing branch of commerce, with John Marshall for its foster-father.

There had been a linen made in Leeds, as in every other part of England, from time immemorial. Long before woollen fabrics came into general use, it was the fashion for country people to grow, or barter, a little flax, and therewith to make rough clothing for themselves and those belonging to them. There was a guild of linen-weavers in London in the fourteenth century, and every important town had a similar association during the middle ages. But the trade was slow in making progress as a trade. Long after England had grown famous for its woollen manufactures, the making of linen clothing was left chiefly in

the hands of country folks and the daughters of the household, their coarser wares being found good enough for ordinary use, while the better sorts were imported from France and Holland. In the second half of the seventeenth century, however, a great change began. In 1663, a law was passed for the encouragement of linen manufacture in England, and without the aid of laws, the trade was readily prosecuted in various parts of Scotland. About 1670, moreover, some Scots resident in the north of Ireland, started the manufacture in Belfast and the neighbourhood, where for many centuries flax had been freely grown, but only for exportation or domestic use. 'No women are abler to spin linen thread well,' said Sir William Temple in 1680, 'than the Irish, who, labouring little in any kind with their hands, have their fingers more supple and soft than any other women of the poor condition among us. And this may certainly be improved into a great manufacture of linen, so as to bear down the trade both of France and Holland, and draw much of the money which goes from England to those parts upon this occasion into the hands of his Majesty's subjects of Ireland, without crossing any interest of trade in England.' Successive generations of statesmen were of that opinion, and in all sorts of ways the linen trade was encouraged in Ireland, much good to the country being done thereby in spite of the consequent injury to the older business in woollen goods. By the year 1760, Belfast, Newry, Drogheda, Londonderry, Dundalk, and Dublin, had come to have a thriving trade in linen, most of which was shipped to Liverpool, for distribution in various parts of England. In Scotland, also, the trade made rapid progress, Glasgow being its head-quarters and other towns, like Kirkcaldy and Dundee, being set by it on the highway to prosperity. In the first half of the eighteenth century, 'linen being everywhere made at home,' according to contemporary report, 'the spinning executed by the servants during the long winter evenings, and the weaving by the village webster,

there was a general abundance of napery and under-clothing. Every woman made her web and bleached it herself, and the price never rose higher than two shillings a yard, and with this cloth nearly every one was clothed. The young men, who were at this time growing more nice, got linens from Holland for shirts, but the old ones were satisfied with necks and sleeves of the fine; which were put on loose above the country cloth.' In those days the handsomest ball-dresses were made of linen, and in country places the wealthiest ladies thought it no disgrace to busy themselves with the spinning wheel. This same spinning wheel was used alike in the cottages of the poor and in the largest manufactories then established. In 1741 a mill was set up at Birmingham on the principle of the roller-spinner invented by Lewis Paul in 1738, and there for a little while it was turned by a couple of donkeys while two girls were employed in working off the yarn thus produced. But nothing noticeable was done before the year 1787. Then John Kendrew, an optician, and Thomas Porthouse, a clockmaker, of Darlington, made public an invention that was destined to effect an entire revolution in the linen manufacture. The speciality of their invention was a cylinder three feet in diameter by ten inches broad, smooth on the surface, with some small cylinders on rollers in connection, for holding and drawing the flax or other fibrous materials put upon it for operation. This machine was first put to work at a little mill set up on the Sperne, by Kendrew and Porthouse, and it was soon adopted in various parts of the kingdom, Darlington being made by it, for a little while, a famous resort of linen manufacturers. Thither James Aytoun went, from Manchester, in 1792, to make careful study of the machine and introduce important improvements in it, before going to Kirkcaldy to spend nearly seventy years in forwarding the trade in which, perhaps, he was the most prominent man of all. Thither also went John Marshall, from Leeds, to receive suggestions which he was to turn very notably

to the advancement both of Leeds and of himself.

Marshall was born at Leeds, on the 27th of July, 1765, three years after Gott. His grandfather, John Marshall, of Yeadon Low Hall, near Leeds, had been a man of some substance; but his father, William Marshall, was a shopkeeper in Briggate. John Marshall was soon tired of his prospects as a shopkeeper's assistant. He was eighteen when Kendrew and Porthouse produced their flax-spinning machine. It is not clear whether he was thereby influenced in his choice of a business or whether his course had already been marked out. At any rate he lost no time in proceeding to Darlington, there mastering the intricacies—such as they were—of the machine, and returning to his own town, to put it into use at Scotland Mill, near Meanwood, which, in 1788, he built a few miles out of Leeds, in partnership with Samuel Fenton, of Leeds, and Ralph Wood, of Knaresborough. There he spent all his energies and all his money in various experiments, doing all he could towards improving the Darlington spinning-machine as well as towards making serviceable the other instruments necessary for the production of linen. That he did considerable business is proved by the fact that his debt to Kendrew and Porthouse, to whom he had agreed to pay a royalty for each spindle that he employed, rose in a few years' time to 900*l*. He made no profits, however, during these first years, and declared himself unable to meet the claim. He also contested it on the ground that the many improvements adopted by him made his machinery so different from that of the Darlington inventors that he had really ceased to make use of their patent right.

Of those improvements Matthew Murray was the chief author. Born at Newcastle in 1765, Murray had been working as an engine-smith at Stockton-on-Tees, when in 1789 he determined to go and try his fortune in Leeds. He offered his services to John Marshall, and was so successful in the first job on which he was employed, that he was permanently engaged by him. By the end of

1789, before he had been a year at his new work, he had made so many valuable suggestions that his master made him a present of 20*l.*, and he was promoted to the management of the little workshop at Scotland Mill. He continued for six years in Marshall's establishment, by his ready wit and steady perseverance helping his employer through all his mechanical difficulties, and enabling him, in due time, to become the most successful flax-spinner in the world. In 1795 he left John Marshall to enter into partnership with James Fenton and David Wood, older and richer men than himself, in establishing engine-building and machine-making shops at Holbeck, then a village, now a part of Leeds. Making all sorts of other tools, he continued to give special attention to the tools required in linen manufacture. 'But for his improvements,' says his son-in-law, 'it is nearly certain that flax-spinning in the neighbourhood of Leeds would have ceased to exist, as all those embarked in it had lost the greater part of their capital without any success. At his commencement mill-gearing was in a very rude state; he left it in nearly its present condition.' In or near the year 1795, John Marshall, also went to Holbeck, there in Water Lane, to set up the much larger mill which, with later additions, is still the chief seat of the linen manufacture, conducted by his successors.

Some time before Murray's independent settlement in Holbeck, John Marshall had gone thither. In 1791 he established, in Water Lane, the mill which, with later additions, is still the chief seat of the flax-spinning business, conducted by his successors. Three mills now occupy the ground, one of them being unique in manufacturing architecture. The building, unlike almost all other large factories, is only one storey in height; one room comprises the whole: about four hundred feet long by more than two hundred broad, it covers nearly two acres of ground. It is nine times as large as Birmingham Town Hall, seven times as large as Exeter Hall in London. The room is about twenty feet high and supported by about

twenty pillars. The spans between the pillars allow the roof to be partitioned off into a series of flatish domes, or groined arches, sixty or seventy in number; and in the centre of each dome is a lofty conical skylight, of such large size that the whole series together contain ten thousand square feet of glass. Upwards of a thousand persons, mostly females, are employed in this room alone. In one part of it the flax-drawing operations are carried on; in another the roving, in another the spinning. This room, perhaps, the largest in the world, is not the only marvel. The roof is a green field, we are told; the wood work being thickly covered with plaster and asphalt, and that with a stratum of earth, which protects the asphalt from the heat of the sun.*

* This is Mr. Chambers' account of the factory in 1841:—'The mill of Messrs. Marshall is probably the largest in the kingdom. Consisting of several large brick edifices and out-houses, some high and some low, it more resembles a town than a single establishment, and at present gives employment to about fifteen hundred individuals, many of whom are children of both sexes. By the usual contrivance of the moving table or scaffold, we were conducted in a similarly easy manner to the top of one of the large buildings, and introduced to the first operation in the process, that of breaking handfuls of flax into three pieces or lengths, and sorting them according to qualities. The lower part of the filaments is the coarsest, the next coarsest is at the top, and the finest is in the middle. It being necessary to separate these qualities, but without cutting, the division is effected by causing an apparatus to break or tear each handful into three parts. The apparatus, which seems a complex combination of wheels and rollers, is exceedingly elegant, being all made of polished iron and brass, and it effects its purpose with great nicety and rapidity. A host of youngsters were employed on several floors in superintending this kind of machine, as also machines for dressing and smoothing the rolls of lint, previous to their being carried to the spinning apparatus. I will not follow the material through its progress, but content myself with saying, that it finally appears in the form of twist, ready for weaving, or in thread prepared for the sempstress. The putting of the thread on reels or small bobbins, such as we see for sale in shops, is a remarkably neat operation. It is done by girls, with the aid of an in-

John Marshall also built a great linen manufactory at Shrewsbury. But his chief business was in Leeds, and there his mills were larger than those of any of the other manufacturers whom his success has led to embark in the trade. In 1821 there were in Leeds and its neighbourhood nineteen mills, having in all 700 horse-power, and containing 36,000 spindles. Four out of the nineteen were Marshall's. In 1831 the number of mills had been increased by five; and in 1838 it had grown to forty, employment being thereby given to 2,027 men, and 4,303 women. In 1846 there were in Leeds thirty-seven separate establishments, giving work to 140 power-looms, 198,076 spindles, and 9,458 men and women, all the other linen factories of Yorkshire having only about half that strength.

This rapid growth of linen manufacture in Leeds has led, of course, to much commerce with other parts of England and with foreign countries. Besides encouraging manufacturers to settle in Leeds, John Marshall's prosperity brought to the town many influential merchants. Of these the worthiest, though not the richest, was Michael Thomas Sadler, fifteen years younger than Marshall: he was born at Snelstone, in Derbyshire, on the 3rd of January, 1780. In a comfortable house, and by estimable parents, he was carefully educated, with the intention that he should be a lawyer. In the year 1800, however, when he was about twenty, he was sent to Leeds, where his elder brother, Benjamin, had already been established as a linen merchant. The brothers worked successfully for ten years, and then entered into partnership with the widow of Samuel Fenton, who had for a long time—long before Leeds had any linen goods of its own to sell—been the principal importer of Irish linens for sale in Yorkshire. Thenceforward the house of Sadler, Fenton, and Company, carried on a thriving trade, both in raw flax and in linen goods,

geniously-contrived spindle, and finger apparatus to guide the thread in even layers, and the filling of a bobbin is the work of only a few seconds.'

having places of business both in Leeds and in Belfast, and doing good service to both districts by promoting an interchange of commodities between Yorkshire and the north of Ireland.

But Michael Thomas Sadler was not himself much of a merchant. During the first few years of his residence in Leeds he found relief from the monotony of the counting-house in literary and other pursuits. He was a hard reader, a close scholar, and a diligent writer. He produced a metrical version of the 'Psalms,' wrote an epic poem and shorter pieces, and contributed numerous Articles to the 'Leeds Intelligencer,' then the leading Tory newspaper in the north of England. He was captain of a company of Leeds volunteers. He was also, during many years, the indefatigable superintendent of a large Sunday School, and all through life an active sharer in all sorts of religious and philanthropic works, having therein congenial fellowship with William Hey, the benevolent and learned surgeon of Leeds, friend of Wilberforce and other leaders of the anti-slavery party.

Gott and Marshall, also, though too full of their commercial duties to give to it very much of their time, were zealous promoters of philanthropic work in Leeds. All four men, and many others, were associated in the foundation of the Leeds Philosophical Society in 1818. In November of that year, at a meeting held in the Court House, under the presidency of William Hey, it was decided to establish a society for the advancement of 'all the branches of natural knowledge and literature, but excluding all topics of religion, politics, and ethics.' On the 9th of November, 1819, the foundation stone of the Philosophical Hall was laid by Benjamin Gott; and on the 6th of April, 1821, it was formally opened, the total cost of the building, about 6000*l.*, being defrayed by subscriptions, in which Gott and Marshall took the lead. Both men were active in helping on the society by all possible means. Gott gave to it fossils, books, and the like. Marshall, besides various donations,

aided it by several lectures. One, delivered in 1819, during the Society's temporary lodgement in the Court House, was on 'The relative Happiness of Cultivated Society and Savage Life.' In 1821 he lectured on 'Geology;' in 1824, 'On the Production of Wealth, and on the Propriety of discussing subjects of Political Economy as distinguished from Politics;' in 1826, 'On the present State of Education in England as a preparation for Active Life.' These titles indicate the bent of the lecturer's mind. Other lectures were from time to time delivered by Michael Thomas Sadler, in common with most of the other leaders of society in Leeds forty years ago.

The Philosophical Society being especially designed, and therein succeeding admirably, for the encouragement of studious thought among the more well-to-do inhabitants of the town, it was quickly followed, apparently in 1824, by the Leeds Mechanics' Institute, adapted for a different class of members. Gott was its first president, Marshall its first vice-president; and both were liberal donors to its funds. Marshall was also a foremost patron of the Lancasterian School established in Leeds. He organized work-schools for the children of his own workpeople; and among various other measures for the instruction of those workpeople, he published a volume on the Economy of Social Life, repeating cleverly and clearly, in a form adapted to the understanding of factory operatives, the leading principles of political economy as they were then established. He was one of the founders of the London University in 1825, and served for many years on its council. In 1826 his zeal for the advancement of education led him to urge the formation of a similar institution in Leeds, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the north of England.

Generally agreeing on matters of philanthropy, the great merchants of Leeds differed widely on political questions. Marshall was a hearty Whig, both from his own convictions and by family ties, his eldest daughter being the second wife of Lord Montague, and two of his sons being

married to daughters of the same nobleman. Gott and Sadler were as zealous on the Tory side. Gott, always shunning noise and turmoil, took little public part in politics. Sadler was a stout and bustling Tory from first to last. Having made himself famous throughout England as an opponent of Roman Catholic Emancipation, he went in 1829, to continue his opposition in parliament as member for Newark-upon-Trent. Before that, in 1826, Marshall had been chosen, along with Lord Milton, to represent the Liberals of Yorkshire. In 1830 he declared himself too old for re-election, but he was an eager promoter of the great reform movement of 1831 in his own neighbourhood, and in 1832, on the first election of members of parliament for Leeds, his son, John Marshall the younger, who died in 1836, was chosen, in company with Thomas Babington Macaulay, the unsuccessful Tory candidate being Michael Thomas Sadler.

Sadler had ceased, long before that time, to have any personal share in the commerce of Leeds, or even in the philanthropic movements of the town. Residing generally in Belfast or London, he devoted himself to political topics and general questions of social philosophy. A fierce opponent of the Reform Bill, he seconded the motion of General Gascoigne, in 1831, which led to the dissolution of the House of Commons, and the consequent excitement in every quarter of England. He was also, to the last, a persistent enemy to Catholic Emancipation; and he was no less steady and eloquent in his opposition to every measure in favour of Free Trade. Specially interesting himself on behalf of Ireland, he sought to establish a law for the allotment of land to all the deserving poor, and that measure he further advocated, with the rich and varied eloquence that characterised all his speeches and writings, in a treatise on 'Ireland, its Evils, and their Remedies.' He it was, too, who produced the famous Ten Hour Bill, for the protection of children employed in factories. He published his opinions

on that subject in a book on 'The Factory System,' and; in another work, on 'The Law of Population,' he undertook to controvert the teachings of Malthus. While writing a supplement to that work, on the 29th of July, 1836, he died at Belfast, only five and fifty years of age.

Gott and Marshall, though both his seniors, survived him; and Gott, after many years of peaceful retirement, in the splendid house that he had adapted to his literary and artistic tastes at Armley—years enlivened by pleasant intercourse with friends like Rennie, Watt, and Chantrey, and hallowed by many noble acts of charity—died on the 14th of February, 1840, in his seventy-eighth year. Marshall was very nearly eighty when he died, on the 6th of June, 1845, at Hallsteads, an estate on the banks of Ulleswater, whither he had gone to pass most of his closing years.

It was not only as hearty and intelligent philanthropists and leaders, the one of the woollen trade, the other of flax manufacture in Yorkshire, that Gott and Marshall earned all the fame they got as benefactors of Leeds. Requiring expensive and intricate machinery for their factories, they, and the other men who followed in their steps, brought skilful tool-makers into the town, and so made it almost the chief centre of iron manufacture in England. We have seen how, in 1789, Matthew Murray had gone to Leeds as a journeyman seeking employment in Marshall's factory, and in due time had become master of a great establishment of his own. Forty years afterwards a yet more famous machinist went to Leeds, soon to attain the highest possible station in its commercial history. This was Sir Peter Fairbairn.

He was born at Smailholme, a village a few miles west of Kelso, on the 11th of September, 1799. He was of humble origin. His father, Andrew Fairbairn, who, in his boyhood, had been for a little while half playfellow, half nurse, to Walter Scott, was a gardener in the service of a Mr. Baillie, of Mellerston, and lived during many years

at Smailholme, going to and fro every day to his work. A few weeks after Peter was born, however, he left Roxburgh to take somewhat higher employment, as manager of a farm of three hundred acres, belonging to Lord Seaforth, of Braham Castle, at Moy, in Ross-shire. There he stayed two years; but, not succeeding very well, went south again in 1801, to try his luck for another two years as steward to Mackenzie of Allengrange, then for a few months to take the superintendence of a farm at Ripley, in Yorkshire, the property of Sir William Ingleby, and finally to settle down as manager of the Percy Main Colliery Company's farm near Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Peter Fairbairn was not six weeks old when he was taken in a covered cart from Smailholm to Moy, a distance of two hundred miles, or more. He was a weakly child at Moy. His brother William, twelve years his senior, acted as his nurse, and in that capacity he first exercised his powers as a machinist. Tired of carrying the little boy in his arms, he resolved to construct a sort of waggon for him to ride in. 'This was a work of some difficulty,' says Mr. Smiles, 'as all the tools he possessed were a knife, a gimlet, and an old saw. With these implements, a piece of thin board, and a few nails, he nevertheless contrived to make a tolerably serviceable waggon-body. His chief difficulty was with the wheels; but this he contrived to surmount by cutting sections from the stem of a small alder-tree, and, with a red-hot poker, boring the requisite holes in their centres to receive the axle. The waggon was then mounted on its four wheels, and to the great joy of its maker, was found to answer its purpose admirably. In it he wheeled his little brother in various directions about the farm, and sometimes to a considerable distance from it.' Like brotherly help was given, as often as it was needed, and in all sorts of ways, through sixty years ensuing.

Neither William nor Peter were able to get much schooling. The poor estate of the family, under the starvation prices of food and cloth-

ing caused by the wars with France and America, made it necessary for Andrew Fairbairn to set his boys to work as soon as ever they were equal to it. William began to fight his own way in the world when he was fourteen. Peter was only eleven when he was taken from the dame's school, where he was learning to read, write, and count, and put to do odd jobs about the collieries and engineering shops in the neighbourhood of Newcastle. In 1813, at the age of fourteen, he was apprenticed to John Capon, a Newcastle millwright, and under him he worked for seven years. In 1821 he went to be journeyman, during a few months, with his brother William, lately established as an engineer and millwright in Manchester. Then he travelled to London, to spend a few more months in Rennie's shop. In 1822 he went to France, working first at Charenton and then in Paris. In 1823 he returned to Manchester, and was again employed by his brother until, in the following year, his known skill as an engineer brought him an invitation from Houldsworth and Company, of the Anderston Foundry, in Glasgow, to enter into partnership with them. That offer he accepted, and he lived in Glasgow about four years, marrying, in 1827, the daughter of one of its most respectable merchants; but seeing small chance of prospering there as he desired to prosper, he left in the autumn of 1828, to establish himself, early in 1829, as a machine-maker on his own account in Leeds.

To his business he brought the experience of fifteen years passed in some of the chief centres of iron manufacture in Great Britain. In Newcastle, where the convenient nearness and abundance of coal was the chief inducement to the establishment of iron works, and where, consequently, steam-engines and other articles of general rather than of special utility were the things chiefly manufactured, he had had sharp schooling in the rudiments and the fundamental principles of his profession. In London he had seen something of those wonderful applications of engineering skill to the construction of docks, harbours,

bridges, and the like, which made the names of Rennie and Telford famous. In Manchester and Glasgow he had found nearly all the energies of the iron manufacturers devoted to the improvement of such machinery as was needed by the cotton-spinners and weavers, and the calico and muslin printers. This was especially the case with Peter Fairbairn's brother and that brother's partner, the young firm of Fairbairn and Lillie, that began business in Manchester in 1817.

'They saw,' says Mr. Smiles, 'that the gearing of even the best mills was of a very clumsy and imperfect character. They found the machinery driven by large square cast-iron shafts, on which huge wooden drums, some of them as much as four feet in diameter, revolved at the rate of about forty revolutions a minute; and the couplings were so badly fitted that they might be heard creaking and groaning a long way off. The speeds of the driving shafts were mostly got up by a series of straps and counter drums, which not only crowded the rooms, but seriously obstructed the light where it was most required for conducting the delicate operations of the different machines.' Another serious defect lay in the construction of the shafts, and in the mode of fixing the couplings, which were constantly giving way, so that a week seldom passed without one or more breakdowns. Fairbairn and Lillie set themselves to remedy these evils. They saw that the mischief resulted chiefly from the insufficiency of woodwork for the weight and the wear and tear that were put upon it. To make it as strong as possible, huge unshapely machinery had to be constructed and used, with great waste of space, and greater loss of power, and even then it was always liable to accident. But William Fairbairn was the first machinist to whom it occurred that these difficulties might be overcome by substituting iron for wood. In 1818 he and his partner set up for M'Connell and Kennedy, at that time the greatest cotton spinners in the world, a new mill, in which this change was in part effected. It gave

immediate satisfaction, suggested other improvements, and, after some ten years of battling with the prejudices of older engineers, led to an entire revolution in the construction of mills for the manufacture of cotton and other textile fabrics. The ten years were about at an end, when Peter Fairbairn went to Leeds, there to put in force and bring to further perfection in the making of machinery for woollen, flax, and silk mills, the methods introduced by his brother.

For this his establishment, known as the Wellington Foundry, has long been famous. Illustration of his services to the mechanical arts may best be given by enumeration of the patents taken out by him during the thirty years of his most energetic work. The first was in 1834, 'for an improved method of preparing, slivering or roving hemp, flax, and other fibrous substances for spinning.' In 1838 he secured exclusive rights 'for certain improvements in looms for weaving ribbons, tapes, and other fabrics,' and 'for certain improvements in machinery for roving, doubling, and twisting cotton, flax, wool, or other fibrous substances.' Another patent was granted him in 1840 'for improvements in apparatus for hackling, combing, preparing or dressing hemp and flax;' and others dated 1841, 1845, 1848, 1849, and 1853, were 'for various improvements in machinery for hackling, cording, drawing, roving and spinning flax, hemp, tow, silk, cotton, and other fibrous substances; also in constructing and applying models or patterns for moulding, preparatory to casting, parts of machinery employed in preparing, spinning, and manufacturing fibrous substances; and also in certain tools to be used in making such machinery.' The last patent taken out by him was in August, 1860, only four months before his death, 'for improvements in the construction of rollers used in machinery for preparing hemp and flax.' All the work done in the Wellington Foundry was noted for its extreme neatness and thoroughness; and the establishment has been famous during more than a quarter

of a century for the order and regularity with which it has been conducted. For a long time its chief productions were connected with textile manufactures; but during the Crimean war it became conspicuous for another branch of iron-work, the construction of tools to be used at Woolwich, Enfield, and other government factories in the making of Armstrong guns and all sorts of smaller firearms. That led to some change in the character of the business. Orders came in for engineering tools of all descriptions, and, just before his death, Peter Fairbairn was employed in planning alterations of the establishment in accordance with these new requirements.

Memorable chiefly as a man of business, Peter Fairbairn was in other ways a conspicuous and useful burgess of Leeds. For several years previous to 1842 he was a member of the Town Council, and in that year he excused himself from continuance at the post by paying the usual fine of 50*l*. In 1854 he was chosen alderman, and in 1857 he was made mayor of Leeds. In 1858, as mayor, unlooked-for distinction came to him, consequent on the opening of the new Town Hall on the 7th of September. At his instigation the Queen was persuaded to perform the ceremony, and during her Majesty's stay in Leeds she was his guest at Woodsley House. In acknowledgment of his services he was knighted by the Queen, and re-elected mayor by his fellow-townsmen. 'Every plan calculated to promote the general welfare and prosperity of the borough, or to make its position as the metropolis of the West Riding more apparent and decisive,' it was said just after his death, 'was warmly supported by the late Sir Peter Fairbairn, and with a zeal and pecuniary sacrifice that showed his heart was in the cause. During his two years' mayoralty Leeds gained a *prestige* far greater than it had ever previously occupied. He was the first mayor who manifested a thorough appreciation of the value of a cordial and friendly unity between the merchants of Leeds and the gentry of the country.

Not only in his official capacity did he show his desire to advance the interests of the borough, but as a private individual his sympathy and purse were never wanting for anything which would promote this end. He was a good supporter of the various scientific, literary, and other useful institutions in the town, and a generous contributor to the local charities.'

Honest and simple-hearted in all his dealings, the very perfection of a self-made man of business, Sir

Peter Fairbairn died on the 2nd of January, 1861. There are now in Leeds one or two other iron-foundries quite as large as, if not larger than, that established by Fairbairn, just as the town is now a famous resort of other workers in wool and flax than Benjamin Gott and John Marshall. But these three deserve to be especially remembered as being, each in his own department, a leader of one of the three great sources of the wealth and fame of modern Leeds.

AMY ROBSART AND CUMNOR HALL.

' Full many a traveller oft hath sighed,
And pensive wept the Countess' fall;
As wandering onward they espied
The haunted towers of Cumnor Hall.'

Ballad.

ONE of the most interesting of the many pleasant spots surrounding the University of Oxford is the village of Cumnor. Not that there is anything intrinsically exciting about it. By no means. Scores of similar spots start up along the traveller's path in a day's journey—all wonderfully alike, and all passed through with uniform indifference. In all you see the church on the hill, the one street, the inn and the forge, the children in the roads, and the geese in the pond. Any one specimen is the exact counterpart of any other, and Cumnor may stand as the type of the whole class. In itself, therefore, Cumnor is commonplace; but as the scene of a romantic episode in the history of our country, of that tale of love—perhaps of crime—in which are linked the names of Amy Robsart and Dudley Earl of Leicester, this village is invested with romantic associations which serve to distinguish it from its kind.

Hence it is, that during the long days of summer many a young collegian may be seen—'Kenilworth' in hand—posting along the road which leads direct from the university to this quiet hamlet; and arrive there when you may, it will be strange if there are not groups of strangers in the churchyard, or at the inn, anxious to identify the

various features of the locality with those described so vividly, yet with so little regard to facts, in the pages of the famous novel. The chief objects of inquiry are Cumnor Hall, or Place, the residence of Anthony Foster, and the prison of the hapless Amy; and the Black Bear, the sole hostelry of the village, kept by honest Giles Gosling. These are the only points indicated by the novelist, and it is in connection with them that all the action of the story, so far as Cumnor is concerned, is described as passing. And let me say at once, lest the romantic traveller should prepare to entertain expectations never to be gratified, that of these edifices no traces now remain. The moonbeams no longer silver

'The walls of Cumnor Hall,
And many an oak that grew thereby.'

The walls have for years been razed to the ground, and as for the oaks—if any ever existed on the spot except in the imagination of the poet—they have disappeared, and given place to a few straggling elms of comparatively recent growth, but which are regarded by the credulous as indicating the line of an apocryphal avenue. A grass-grown mound in an enclosed field alone shows the site of the Hall; and though local tradition points out a barn as oc-

cupying the place of the inn, and there is still exhibited the signboard of Giles Gosling, antiquarian research has gone far to prove the alleged house an impossibility, the signboard a forgery, and Giles himself a myth.

Still, the village is worth a visit. The site of the Hall is clearly enough indicated to impart an added vividness to the descriptive pages of 'Kenilworth,' which, so far as generals go, do not greatly sin against accuracy, though Sir Walter Scott is said never to have been at Cumnor, and there is a *bonâ-fide* tomb in the church sufficiently deserving attention, as that of Anthony Foster. The loss of the remains of the Hall itself we owe to the lately deceased Earl of Abingdon. What motives could have influenced that nobleman in ordering the destruction of so interesting a relic we can only conjecture, more especially as the ground upon which it stood does not appear to be turned to any profitable account. The villagers have it, that his lordship was apprehensive of too great an influx of visitors after the appearance of 'Kenilworth;' but as that circumstance would only have tended to improve the prospects of the place, and, consequently, the value of the Earl's property, the account seems hardly feasible. Fortunately, before its destruction, it had attracted the attention of those capable of appreciating its interest and value, and who have given us both pictorial and descriptive records of its main features. From these descriptions, it would appear that the Hall was situated on the western side of, and was attached to, Cumnor churchyard. It was a building in the Domestic Gothic style, of no great architectural pretensions, and, as may be seen from the foundations, it was arranged in the form of a quadrangle. The entrance was by an avenue of trees from the north. Amy Robsart's suite of apartments were on the western side of the quadrangle. On that side, also, but distant from them by the entire length of the long gallery, was the flight of stairs down which she was reported to have fallen. The Hall was surrounded by a park of some extent, which is now, with the ex-

ception of an acre or two, surrounded by a stone wall, used for agricultural purposes. The barn which the villagers point out as occupying the site of the Black Bear, is on the northern side of the Hall, and separated from it by the public road. If it stood there at the date of the adventures described in the romance, it must have been directly opposite the entrance avenue, which is not a very probable circumstance, and certainly is not implied by Sir Walter Scott, for we constantly hear of 'going up to the Place,' whereas the proper expression would have been 'going across' to it. The fictitious signboard, which has painted on it the well-known sign of the bear and ragged staff (the arms of the Warwick family), hangs up in front of an inn of that name on the western side of the field in which the Hall stood.

For the sake of the story with which they are associated these details interest. And in thinking them over, the mind naturally raises the question—interesting in a literary point of view—as to what the truth of that story really was? How far Sir Walter Scott's narrative is consistent with the teachings of history? What was intrinsic about it—what mere invention? That he took liberties with his subject is obvious on the very face of the romance; but to what extent did the poetic license carry him? The matter is in itself interesting, and it becomes also of some importance that it should receive some little elucidation, inasmuch as many readers have a strong faith in the historic teachings of Sir Walter; and even on those minds disposed to be on their guard, the impression produced by his vivid and exciting narratives is so much stronger than that derived from any history written in the old, tedious, jog-trot style, that erroneous ideas are pretty sure to prevail generally upon any subject which has come under his hand.

As, owing partly to a taste for lighter fare, partly to the constant issue of new works of fiction, the Scott novels are not so widely read now as they were ten years ago, and it is therefore possible to find people

who are not 'up in Scott, it may be as well to prefix a slight *résumé* from memory of the chief incidents of 'Kenilworth.' The Earl of Leicester has fallen in love with Amy, daughter of Sir Hugh Robsart. He has induced her to quit her father's roof; has married her, and has provided a magnificent suite of apartments at Cumnor Place for her reception. Meanwhile, he has risen in favour with Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, and there has commenced the struggle between love and ambition. But for Amy, the secreted wife, he might perhaps become king of England! Time passes: the struggle becomes more severe, and, as it proceeds, Amy becomes impatient of confinement in what is, in fact, her prison at Cumnor, her gaoler being Anthony Foster, drawn as a sour, puritanical, miserly curmudgeon, with an only daughter, known as the pretty Janet. Amy is naturally anxious to be publicly avowed and presented at court as the wife of Leicester, who half yields to her importunities, and is only restrained by the sneers of his follower, Richard Varney. The story approaches its climax, when Queen Elizabeth visits Kenilworth Castle, and Amy, escaping from Cumnor, and travelling thither on foot, discloses to the queen the fact of the secret marriage. The poor Countess returns to her prison, and Leicester is moved by Varney to utter the fatal words, 'Let her die.' The manner of her death is most effective. Amy is, under pretence of being more secure, placed in a chamber hitherto occupied by Foster himself. Outside the door of his chamber is 'a short wooden gallery of black oak.' This was in the nature of a trap-door, which could be let down at will, revealing a terrific abyss beneath it. A scrap of dialogue explains its nature and application fully:—

'Yonder gimcrack of thine,' said Varney, 'will remain secure in appearance, will it not, though the supports are withdrawn beneath?'

'A mouse's weight would do it,' said Foster.

'Why then she dies in attempting her escape; and what could you or I help it, honest Tony?'

The poor captive falls into the snare. Hearing, as she supposes, from the tramp of horses in the court, Leicester's arrival, she rushes forth to meet him, the trap gives way, and at the bottom of the abyss is 'a heap of white clothes like a snowdrift.' Retributive justice overtakes Foster; he disappears, and his skeleton is found years after in a cell which he had entered, and the door of which accidentally closed upon himself with a spring lock.

Now, the first thing which the historian is inclined to urge against this narrative, is a reckless disregard of dates, arising chiefly from the fact that incidents extending over some twenty years are herein crowded into little more than a year. The chief anachronism lies in the fact that Amy's marriage and Elizabeth's visit to Kenilworth are made nearly contemporaneous events; whereas, while the marriage took place in 1549, and her death in 1560—after an interval of eleven years—the revels of Kenilworth were not held until 1575—no less than twenty-six years after! The dates have, I believe, been well ascertained, and they give a fatal blow to the whole structure of the romance. Once let the fact be borne in mind, that Amy Robsart had been in her grave fifteen years before the event upon which the whole story turns transpired, and the anachronism must startle the stoutest advocate of the 'poetic license.'

One can hardly credit that Sir Walter himself could have been aware of the relation, in point of time, which these events bore to each other; certain liberties he would naturally allow himself for the sake of effect; but such a wilful falsification of popular historical facts is hardly credible. A minor fact is, that Amy is throughout described as the Countess of Leicester, whereas Lord Dudley was not made Earl of Leicester until three years after her death. Many other inaccuracies of a like nature might be pointed out; but these, as a matter of course, are consequent upon the falsification of the main dates.

The incidents are not more surely to be relied on than the time of their

occurrence. Amy Robsart was not beguiled from her father's house; she was not married secretly. It is thought that this hapless lady was born about the year 1530, at Stanfield Hall, recently rendered so notorious as the scene of the Jermyn murders (this is conjecture); and there is in the British Museum an entry in a diary, in the hand of King Edward VI., to the following effect, which shows that the marriage was solemnized publicly in the royal presence, June 4th, 1549. The passage is curious in several respects:— 'S. Robert Dudeley, third sonne to the Erle of Warwic, married S. Jon Robartses daughter, after wich mariage ther were certain gentlemen that did strive who shuld first take away a goses heade wich was hanged alive on tow crose postes.' The ceremony was performed in the palace at Richmond. No doubt the artistic development of the story is greatly heightened by the marriage being represented as a profound secret. However, there is the royal minute, all the more precious from its glorious orthography, and thereby we are able to establish the facts of the case.

Documentary evidence also serves to establish every minute particular respecting the other important circumstance in this history—the death of Amy Robsart. Unquestionably certain circumstances of grave suspicion did attach to this event; and both at the time, and for years after, Leicester was charged by common rumour with compassing his wife's death by foul means, in order that he might be at liberty to share the throne with Elizabeth. The charge was made the subject of various ballads and other libellous publications, in one of which occurs this passage: 'His lordship hath a speciall fortune that when he desireth any woman's favor then, what person soever standeth in his way, hath the luck to dye quickly, for the finishing of his desire. As, for example, when his lordship was in full hope to marry Her Majesty, and his owne wife stood in his light, as he supposed, he did but send her to the house of his servant Foster, of Cumner, by Oxford, where shortly after she had

the chance to fall from a paire of staires, and so to breake her neck, but yet without hurting of her hood that stood upon her head.'

From the peculiar situation in which Dudley was placed, it was quite natural that his enemies, who, from the unwonted measure of royal favour bestowed upon him, must have been numerous, should circulate such a report, and his own conduct only served to confirm it. The facts of the case appear to be as follows: In the September of 1560, while Dudley was in attendance on the Queen at Windsor, 'there came to me Bowes, by whom I do understande that my wife is dead, and, as he saithe, by a falle from a paire of stayres, little other understanding can I have of him.*' On receiving this intelligence, his lordship immediately took every step but the one which would have served most effectually to clear him from the suspicions of which he at once entertained a prescient fear. 'Considering what the wicked world will bruyte' he says, 'I can take no rest.' He sent to his brother-in-law, Apleyard, and others of the poor lady's friends, and he wrote to one Blount, a confidential friend, praying him to go to Cumnor and make every inquiry into the matter; but he did not deem it necessary to go to Cumnor himself. The obvious course for the horrified and sorrowing husband to have pursued, said the good-natured world, would have been to hasten to the scene of the fearful catastrophe, and look personally into all the circumstances attending it. His lordship adopted a different course, and thereby gave his enemies a handle for their insidious slanders.

In his letter to Blount, Dudley urges him not only to make a personal investigation, but to insist upon a coroner's jury of the 'discretest and substantial men,' taking every means to ascertain 'whether it happened by evil chaunce or by villanye.' Thus advised, Blount set off for the scene of action, but his mode of going about the business was curious. He did not post

* From Papers of State, Pepysian Library, Cambridge, which contains a selection of Dudley's letters relative to the event.

directly from Windsor to Cumnor, but stopped short at Abingdon, a small town a few miles distant, and passed the night at an inn there, 'because,' says he, 'I was desirous to hear what news went abroad in the country.' So, after supper, he proceeded to 'pump' the landlord, and having got from him the particulars of the accident, he endeavoured to get from him what the popular feeling on the subject was. 'I asked him by what chance?' He said, he knew not. 'I asked him his judgment and the judgment of the people?' He said some was disposed to say well and say evil. 'What is your judgement?' said I. 'By my troth,' said he, 'I judge it a misfortune, because it chanced in that honest gentleman's house (that of Anthony Foster). His great honesty doth much cut the evil thoughts of the people.' When Blount at length reached Cumnor, he found that a coroner's jury had already been summoned, and on inquiry, he came to the conclusion that they were 'as wise and as able men to be chosen upon such a matter as any men, being but countrymen, as I ever saw;' at the same time, they were likely to 'conceal no fault; if any there be, they being, as I hear, part of them, very enemies to Anthony Foster.' To the jurors Blount conveyed Dudley's special request that they would 'earnestly, carefully, and truly, deal in this matter, to find it as they shall see it fall out.'

I am not aware that there exists anything in the form of depositions taken before the jury. Most probably at that period it was deemed sufficient that twelve good men and true should be satisfied as to facts sufficiently to enable them to return their verdict, and the necessity of any records of the evidence taken, or even of the verdict passed, had not been recognised. It is only, incidentally, therefore, that we get at the facts proved before them, and these are quite at variance with the romantic death scene conjured up to give effect to 'Kenilworth.' It appeared that the tragic event transpired on a Sunday, which also happened to be Abingdon fair-day.

According to Blount's letter, Lady Dudley 'rose that day very early, and commanded all her sort (her maid servants) to go to the fair, and would suffer none to tarry at home.' He adds 'that with any of her own sort that made reason of tarrying at home, she was very angry.' And he cites the case of a Mrs. Odingsells, a widow who lived in the house, and who seems to have stood upon her gentility, 'who refused to go that day to the fair, because she said it was no day for gentlewomen to go in, but said the morrow was much better, and then she would go. Whereunto my lady answered and said that she might choose and go at her pleasure, but all hers should go. They asked her who should keep her company if they all went? She said Mrs. Owen should keep her company at dinner.' It would thus appear that the suspicious circumstance of all servants being absent originated in the wish of Lady Dudley herself, and not with Foster; also that there were in the building that day Foster himself, Mrs. Odingsells, and Mrs. Owen. The next and only fact is that during the day—probably on the return of the servants—the poor lady was found lying dead at the bottom of a flight of stairs, in the northern part of the building, quite remote from her own chamber. Down these stairs it was alleged that she must have fallen. From a letter of Dudley's, it would appear that, after the jury had satisfied themselves, one Smith, the foreman, took the very unusual course of writing to his lordship to inform him, as the result that 'it doth plainly appear a very misfortune.' In other words a verdict of 'Accidental death' was returned. This, it might be supposed, would have proved satisfactory to all parties, but it evidently did not set Dudley's mind at ease, for notwithstanding that Arthur Robsart, Mr. Affley, and Blount were on the spot, and probably present at the examination of the witnesses, he wrote subsequently: 'Nevertheless, because of my thorough quietness and all others hereafter . . . when they have given their verdict, though it be never so plainly found, assuredly I do wish that another sub-

stantial company of honest men might try again for the mere knowledge of the truth.' The inquiry also failed to satisfy the public mind in the neighbourhood, and from time to time versions of the transaction obtained, full of gratuitous horrors, and it is upon these, rather than upon the more legitimately ascertained facts that Sir Walter Scott has based his romance.

Now, a few words touching Anthony Foster. We are all familiar with the character Sir Walter has drawn—a combination of the hypocritical puritan and the miser, a fit instrument for any wickedness, a being, in fact, from whom we shrink with loathing. The romancist had no warranty in facts for creating such a character. He was descended from a tolerably good family, received a superior education, married well—being related by marriage to Lord Williams of Thane—and he was possessed of considerable landed property. In 1570 he took his seat in the House of Commons as member for Abingdon. He had by his marriage five children. On his death in 1572 he was buried in Cumnor church, and his tomb of Purbeck marble in the chancel, just in front of the altar, is the chief object of interest in the village. On it he is represented clad in complete armour as an esquire. The inscription on the tomb is in Latin, of which the following is a translation: 'Anthony Foster, Esq., the generous offspring of a generous race; Lord of the Manor of Cumnor, Berks; son of

Richard Foster, late of Salop, Esq., who had four sons, the latest whereof was Anthony.

'In person fair, and if the brightest sense,
Where wisdom joined with smoothest eloquence;

In action, justice, speech, a flowing grace,
Faith in religion, gravity of face;
A patriot firm, and to the needy kind,
With numerous graces more adorned his mind.
Death took too much (what can his power survive?)

Yet, spite of death, his fame shall ever live.

'Skilled in the softest notes the Muses sing;
Or on the harp to touch the sounding string;
Pleased with the florist's tender nursing care,
Or architect stupendous piles to rear.
Read in the tongues the ancient sages taught,
And learned works confess how well he wrote.'

With all the allowance reasonably to be made for the license of tomb-stone eulogy, no one can read these crude lines without feeling the utter impossibility that they ever could have been written upon such a man as the alleged murderer of Amy Robsart. Unquestionably Scott had the authority of tradition, of several old gossiping chroniclers, and of the ballad literature of which he was so fond, for associating Anthony Foster's name with the tragedy he set himself to describe; but for the dark colouring of the character, as for so many of the incidents of his story, he drew so entirely upon his excited imagination, and in so doing violated historic truth so grossly, as thereby to destroy in the minds of even tolerably well-informed readers much of the charm which 'Kenilworth' is calculated to produce.

W. S.

ARCHERY VERSUS LOVE.

IT was fine dry summer weather, the sun shone daily, and croquet reigned triumphant everywhere. There was croquet diluted with tea-cups, and *tête-à-têtes* in shady corners; there was croquet double-faced, which, having entangled you among the hoops, suddenly expected you (in a pair of thick boots) to be ready to whirl some pretty girl to a *deux temps* double quick time; there was croquet *de rigueur*, when strong-minded ladies frowned on your careless strokes, as they would on a laxity of morals. I don't think I was very fond of croquet (especially the latter type), viewing it as a game, yet I was willing enough to bow my head to the wooden image fashion had set up, and as to the teacup and shady corner part of the business, why it was very pleasant to me.

A stranger to English society for many years, and coming among fair skins and mitigated crinolines, after sojourning among savage belles and faded Englishwomen, I may safely say I enjoyed myself. Hadn't I need? Did not delicate notes request the pleasure of me several times a week? I was staying with my friends the Joneses, and Mr. Jones was not in such demand. It was supposed, of course, he would not like leaving Mrs. Jones, who did not visit so often. I don't think, by the way, he would have minded *that* very much.

As for me, I was unencumbered—shall we say agreeable?—and not poor, though, of course, that had nothing to do with it.

It was at croquet I met her. She had on delicate floating apparel, which refreshed one some way to look at. She had great big blue eyes, and a 'strawberries and cream' complexion, and the merriest little laugh in the world, and I was fresh from copper skins, and no toilettes to speak of.

I was in luck that afternoon of introduction. We were bracketed together by the lady of the house, and I soon found the mallet was her special weapon. I am not much of a player myself, but that was of no

consequence. How she rushed to help me from banishment behind the shrubs, and sent me in a triumphal manner through the hoops, and then told me, with a winning smile, she would 'stay near me,' this is all a story of the past. I watched her lazily and admiringly. I met her time after time, always becomingly attired, always with the 'strawberries and cream' complexion, and thoughts began to frame themselves into shapes.

'How pleasant it would be if one could have always some one near to bring one from behind the prickly bushes of life in that easy manner,—to be put exactly in the direct line without any trouble.'

'Would those blue eyes be able to see the tactics of life as well as they saw those of croquet?'

I grew speculative sometimes, as I supported myself on my mallet, under the shade of a tree. I would fancy 'the green ball' to be myself, and the 'brown ball' to be Miss O'Brian's self, and the 'staying near' to be unconnected with unfeeling wooden substances. And then I thought that in the little place which I had had left me at Babbicombe-on-Trent, I might settle down without much trouble. Then I advanced another step, and thought of my 'chances.' She was a very pretty girl; but then there are so many pretty girls in England, and the number of agreeable (?) men is certainly not in proportion—not that I ever dreamed of her taking me from that motive.

And then I appraised myself.

The 'fors' were—youth (by comparison) and appearance not unprepossessing. Why, in Dwaglor, the ladies called me 'that good-looking Mr. Tollemache;' but then, to be sure, that was when I first went out, and there the darkies set one off.

As to the 'againsts,' I could really think of nothing, except it were my dislike to exertion, and a slight attack of the liver occasionally, which had brought me home from India to Babbicombe-on-Trent.

Altogether the 'ayes' had it.

I did not feel impetuous in my affections; I rarely do about anything, which the doctors would set down to a 'torpidity of system.' Why should one rush at what one could as easily obtain by a quiet and unfatiguing walk?

I have always viewed Tantalus with contempt: after a few unsuccessful attempts at the apple, why didn't he give up trying, philosophically? I should. Here was a rosy apple on which I had set my eye; but why should I begin to shake the tree and bring it down frantically, when I had it in view, and was in no hurry?

She liked me I felt sure. I am not a dancing man; and though she in an early (and unguarded) moment of our acquaintance had told me she 'delighted' in it, she would forego all such delights to stand with me in the embrasure of some window and listen to my Indian (?) stories, which weren't all about India either, but often came as close to home as the individual recess, where we were nearly as isolated as Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday.

She was a charming girl! so lively, and energetic too, which was exactly as it should be.

I would give her the reins (with my hand on the check-string, of course), and we might drive through life together pleasantly. Isn't it a beneficent dispensation that tall men should choose hop o' my thumb wives, and Jack o' the bean-stalks should seek diligently to mate with female giantesses, and so on?

So I had nearly, very nearly, made up my mind; indeed it was the time of shaking the tree I was chiefly doubtful about.

I had been with the Joneses about a month, when one morning as I was smoking a cheroot, and anathematizing the English climate, my servant brought me one of the usual monogramed and delicately scented notes. I opened it languidly.

The hot weather (with none of our cooling contrivances abroad) was beginning to tell upon me.

At the last garden party I had been beguiled into drinking something they called champagne, from

politeness, and it had made me 'feel my liver.'

As I read the note, I thought my society was no pleasure to be requested just then. But it was not wanted just then; the invitation was for ten days' distant, and was not for quite the usual thing; the card was polished (like a child's face for company) into an extra state of glaze—there was to be archery.

She shot! She would be there! I should recline on the grass, and watch her from beneath the shade of some overhanging beech, and admire the grace of her attitudes, perhaps bestow on her some pretty trinket, and compliments to match, which I could prepare beforehand, but which would be supposed impromptu.

There was Diana with her silver bow—no! that would not do. I did not think Miss O'Brian would care to be likened to the heathen divinity. Well! there was plenty of time before they (the compliments) would be wanted. In a fatal moment, lured by the pleasant picture of myself couchant (under the beech), and Miss O'Brian rampant (by the targets), I wrote my answer of acceptance.

Is there anything more trying to the temper than an illness which does not keep one in strict quarantine, or deprive one of the sense of one's misery, but which only makes you painfully acute to the smallest of annoyances? I was not really ill, I was (that expressive masculine word) 'seedy.'

Mrs. Jones, who is not a pretty woman at any time, was positively hideous in my eyes.

Jones, who is a good-natured fellow enough, but somewhat slow, bored me frightfully, and the weather grew hotter and hotter.

'How you English can sit down in a state of lethargy, and bear it without doing anything, amazes me. Why, in India, we should have all the punkahs going.'

Jones did not tell me civilly he wished I were in India, though I dare say he thought it. He only said he was sorry they hadn't a punkah, but Mrs. Jones should come and fan me if I liked.

Mrs. Jones fan me! Well, never mind. I declined gratefully.

Two days afterwards I was worse, and had to call in a medical adviser. He came, looked at me, and was silent. I gave him a benefit of my pulse, also tongue.

A ray of hope, as it were, overspread the gravity of his face (as one who, having had a difficult problem to solve, has obtained a key).

He spoke. I was to be kept on low diet, to rest, and to keep myself cool.

Was I in danger? No, I wasn't; but I was to obey orders, otherwise——. (A gloomy vision of a tombstone at Babbicombe, with my name and age neatly engraved, presented itself.)

But how could I obey orders? The small-pox would have had its advantages, by removing the young Joneses from the scene for fear of contagion.

With no contagion to fear, who could prevent that bumping and screaming which accompanied every young Jones in its wanderings about the house?

Gloom was a feature of my complaint, and I *was* gloomy. However, though the little Joneses bumped themselves and cried over themselves, though the weather was as hot as ever, and as to the nature of the 'low diet,' the less said of it the better, in a few days I began to mend.

The yellow mist which had obscured Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and the world in general, began to dissolve.

I acknowledged she was not a 'bad sort of woman in her way,' as I sat down with them to a little dinner in honour of my recovery, and 'took to my victuals' like a schoolboy.

And about this party—should I go? I was still weak, but I thought of Miss O'Brian, and how there is always a kind of interest floating about a man not in a robust state of health (there being no occasion to allude to the nature of the complaint).

It was very hot, but I thought I would go, especially as Jones being

invited, and Mrs. Jones 'unable,' I did not like delivering up my mare to his tender mercies.

'Keep yourself cool,' my doctor (who seemed loth to discontinue his visits) said to me.

Just what I purposed doing. With that object in view, nothing could be better than a little archery.

We did not speak much during our drive. Jones, who had been 'set upon' by Mrs. Jones previous to starting, was somewhat crushed at present, and viewed the landscape in a sort of deprecatory way, as if he feared Mrs. Jones might appear suddenly, and upbraid him for excess of joviality.

As for me—I was thinking. Should I 'do it' to-day? There might be such a thing as keeping the apple hanging too long.

There was a good deal to be said both for and against matrimony. My friend Jones, for instance, who used be one of the jolliest fellows going at Oxford, had lost a very considerable portion of that jollity; but then I was altogether a different sort of man to Jones; neither did Miss O'Brian bear the faintest resemblance to Mrs. Jones, who could *never* have had a 'strawberries and cream' complexion. Jones' spirits had risen somewhat when the wheels of my cart crunched the gravel of the drive.

Jones and I proceeded into the drawing-room, which was gasping for air through open doors and windows, and where the lady of the house, a Mrs. Gresham, sat at a small tea-table, surrounded by several younger ladies, likewise gasping, but suppressing their feelings from what they owed to society.

'So sorry Mrs. Jones couldn't come,' said Mrs. Gresham, doing her 'duty to her neighbour' by Jones, and 'so glad to see you, Mr. Tollemache; won't you have some tea?' doing her duty to her neighbour by me.

We took Mrs. Gresham's hand, which was fat and warm, and kept company in these respects with Mrs. Gresham's face; but I declined the tea, and looked round for Miss O'Brian.

'We have had so many disappointments,' pursued our hostess, handing Jones a cup; 'it is always the men who have all the engagements.'

Was Miss O'Brian a 'disappointment?' I did not care about the men. In another minute I was put out of my suspense by the vision of the young lady.

She looked lovely, and, literally speaking, as 'cool as a cucumber.' She was clad as far as the waist in something delicately green, which terminated in flowing folds of white muslin, and she had a hat of white and green, which set off her complexion as a leaf will a strawberry. Something cool and refreshing and at the same time charming. Yes, I had made up my mind, I would 'do it' to-day.

Jones drank his tea unmoved, but I gave up my chair to her, hovering over the back of it in a cockatoo attitude, taking note of the belt round her small waist and the divers little strappings about her, like those which decorate a new rocking-horse.

'Isn't it too hot to shoot, dear?' said the hostess.

'Dear,' was addressed to Miss O'Brian and made me long to add the 'rest' to it. Clearly I was being worked up to the proper pitch of enthusiasm!

'Oh no,' Miss O'Brian answered; 'I never feel the heat, it can't be too hot for me, if other people think the same.'

'Other people' did think the same, or if they did not, they would not confess it.

'Other people' were represented by four young ladies with belts round *their* waists, and dabs of green about their persons, to show their calling.

Green did not suit 'other people,' so well as it did Miss O'Brian.

As for me, I was charmed with her coolness, with the prospect of myself stretched under some beech-tree with Miss O'Brian to look at, instead of having to struggle through hoops this hot day.

Then Jones having finished his tea, Mrs. Gresham proposed the garden.

There were more young ladies, a great many more young ladies, and that portion of Mrs. Gresham's party who weren't disappointments, scattered about at intervals. At such intervals, and with such interregnums that actually Jones was smiled upon by a nice-looking girl in white muslin, with a pink parasol, who was an interregnum.

We hovered about the flower-beds a little while, before our hostess arranged us, and I found myself near Miss O'Brian.

'I can't help you through the hoops to-day, Mr. Tollemache.'

'And I cannot get on without you,' I answered, with an expression meant to be expressive.

I think it was, for she cast down her blue eyes, and began to play with her buttons.

However, I did not mean to 'do it' just then, so I went on.

'I am coming to see you shoot, and as I know nothing about it you must teach me.'

'To shoot, Mr. Tollemache?' she asked, with a winning smile.

Heaven forbid on such a day! I did not say so, merely that I would not tax her so heavily, only would she explain what all these little implements about her meant, for I had been abroad so long, I had never seen archery, only heard of it.

'I will stand, like little Tell, with an apple on my head,' I went on, 'and you shall shoot at me.'

She said with a pout I must think myself very safe.

But I told her (expressively again) I did not think so at all, quite the reverse, and though she played with her buttons again, she did not seem at all displeased; so we were both very contented.

Then Mrs. Gresham, who had been administering more tea, came out again, and formed us into order, and into those 'sides' which often give so much dissatisfaction, and the few men left out of the 'disappointments' were tried to be distributed impartially.

'You play, Mr. Tollemache?'

'Thank you, not to-day. I wish to see the ladies shoot,' I said.

I dare say she sighed. There was Miss Bramwell, 'important,' but

aged fifty, and with an awful temper, standing armed with a mallet but without any 'side' at all.

I was not going to be sacrificed to Miss Bramwell. What a lucky man I was to escape it!

Jones's face looked already like the outside of a glass of iced water, and as for Captain Maëlstrom of the —th, he might have been a piece of broken furniture on which the glue had been unsuccessful.

Jones was used to heat, and did not mind it near a friendly pink parasol, but as for me, I felt I could not have stood it.

Then a Miss Gresham was requested to take us to the field. There were five young ladies and myself.

Well, I wished for their sakes, poor things, there was some one else whose affections weren't already given away.

Then there was a boy, too, aged about thirteen, called Tom, who had joined our little procession, because he said—

'Croquet was so slow, only fit for women.'

'You shall score, Mr. Tollemache,' said Miss O'Brian, 'if you will.'

'I should be delighted.' (I should want something to do under the tree.)

'Oh, thanks' she said with charming warmth, 'we did not know whom we should find to do it; for Tom is so lazy he never will.'

Tom said not if he knew it!

What ill-mannered cube boys of that age are! however, perhaps he was not well up in his addition.

It was just the field I had pictured—blazingly hot where the targets were set up, but with large overhanging trees by the hedge, where I should have a full view. I again said to myself 'Lucky fellow!'

The four young ladies and Miss O'Brian (I did not class her with the herd) began to arrange their implements, and strap themselves up as if they were so many railway rugs. I had to stand in the sun meanwhile, watching the strapping, and wishing the process over. I was not obeying my doctor, however, it was rather pleasant helping Miss

O'Brian to fit her shield on her round plump arm, so I endured it.

'Now Mary,' said Miss O'Brian, 'will you begin?'

I wasn't interested in 'Mary.' Mary was of a very large circumference round the waist, not to say clumsy, and did not look well in green.

I hoped she would be quick.

'Here, Mr. Tollemache,' said the object of my affections, giving me a rainbow-tinted pasteboard, 'this is the card—you will soon get into it.'

She did not seem to expect me to leave at present, though that boy had already gone off to my tree, and was in a state of repose beneath it.

Well! I would walk across with them once, as it seemed to be expected—being in love I would submit to so much.

'Mary' was not quick at all. She was very slow. She pulled herself back till I thought the green jacket would never stand such a strain on it; she screwed her eye along the top of her arrow, and opened her mouth as she let it off, and nothing came of it after all, so I thought the game certainly not worth the candle.

It really was tiresome having to walk one hundred and thirty yards in this sun, for I saw at once that archery is no field for flirtation. How could I whisper soft nothings to my O'Brian, with six other ears (deducting those two otherwise engaged) taking them all in as well?

Besides, they were shooting for some trinket, and wasn't there intense eagerness in even Miss O'Brian, to see how the chances of future possession lay? She certainly looked well, as I should have thought had I been surveying her from an ice-house, but with the thermometer at 100°, and the sun on my head, I could think of and feel little except the heat. How I should enjoy that tree when we came back! We marched across all together, and as if for a wager, and being a man I could only remonstrate in this way—

'Won't you heat yourself, Miss O'Brian?'

Answer. 'Oh no, I never feel heat. I believe I was meant for a salamander.'

I was not, and began to think her coolness a small disadvantage; however, it might answer on the Jack Sprat principle.

'Are you so *very* fond of shooting?' I asked (conversation having to be general).

'Passionately,' said Miss O'Brian; 'I practise two hours every day for the Grand National.'

Two hours a day absent from a husband!

Jones would not have minded if Mrs. Jones had cultivated archery; but could I bear a two hours' daily separation? Humph.

'It ithen't tho nith every day,' said Miss Gresham, a cheerful girl with a lisp; 'we havn't alwayth a gentleman to pick up our arrows.'

Good heavens! and that was what I had brought on myself by accompanying them across the field, and yet my fears were nothing to the reality.

I knew 'Mary's' arrows were all to pick up, so were Miss Gresham's, but I did not know that those same arrows would often flatten themselves in the earth, and (with the sun beating down upon you) you might pass and repass their hiding-place unawares.

I could have anathematized the arrows even in that one end.

But—it would soon be over!

I thought Mary's waist looked larger than ever, as I stood a silent receptacle of arrows and the card. How could a girl shoot with that figure? If she knew the impression she made on the masculine mind, I don't think she would.

There were only four arrows 'in' this time, and I contemplated gloomily the picking up and search before I escaped.

At last it was over. I found an embedded arrow of Miss Gresham's, and handed it to her with a faint attempt at a smile.

'You begin to see it now, don't you?' said Miss O'Brian.

Yes, I had seen quite enough! I replied, 'Oh, perfectly.'

They were about to begin *da capo*.

'What is to be done with this fine thing?' I said, facetiously, dangling the scoring-card by its pencil.

'To be done with it! why, you

are to mark; I explained, you know,' said Miss O'Brian; 'after each end you put down.'

After *each* end!! I was expected to do that Sahara, that treadmill, that picking-oakum in an oven,—for twelve interminable ends! I, who detested exertion, and medically was to be kept cool, while that boy reclined under my tree!

What was I to do? To give up pretty Miss O'Brian?—to desert women?—to say that I (a man) could not stand it? And yet—I could not.

'I am afraid I am depriving Tom of his privileges,' I said, feeling despairing enough.

'Oh, Tom hasn't arrived at the age of regarding them as privileges,' said Miss O'Brian, brightly.

Neither had I arrived at that happy delusive age. Tom must be forced, however.

'Perhaps,' I said, 'it will be better to give him a lesson in civilization, if he is such a Goth.'

Miss O'Brian looked at me rather doubtfully, and then shouted 'Tom!' at the top of her silvery voice.

It sounded to me like the call from a wrecked vessel to a sail in the distance.

Would it, oh! would it pass on regardless?

Tom, who was ignorant of being regarded as a sail, shouted back something unintelligible.

'Come here' (from the despairing mariner).

The sail neared—in other words, the boy got up and slowly approached, hands in pockets, and whistling.

'Well,' he said, 'what do you want? It was jolly under that tree. Have you anything to give me?'

'Mr. Tollemache thinks you are lazy, and had better pick up arrows.'

The boy eyed me contemptuously and sourly.

'While I mark,' I hastened to say, seeing that unpromising expression. (Better a half-loaf than no bread.)

It was no bread from that boy.

'Can you catch a weazel asleep?' said the imp. (Thereby suggesting to my mind that I had been a—not exactly a weazel—caught asleep.)

'Pick up arrows, indeed! on a hot day like this—and holidays, too! No, thank you.'

'The idea of a child like you,' said one young lady, 'talking so. It's not too hot for us, or for Mr. Tollemache.' (Was it not?)

'Oh, he's been used to India; it's like Christmas to him. I should think he's freezing. Would you like papa's great-coat, Mr. Indian?'

(Chorus of ladies) 'Tom! Tom!'

'Well, I don't care; he wanted to back out and shove it on me.'

What a hit!—a regular 'bull's-eye.' I could only repeat with vehemence, 'Back out!!'

Did not the state of English society demand such vehemence?

A sacrifice may be comparatively easy, when known and appreciated as such; but a sacrifice looked upon in the light of a favour to yourself, is a different thing altogether.

And *such* a sacrifice!

I made a little arithmetical calculation—

Given, my present feelings at 130 yards, what would be the result after 12 times 130?

On a day, too, when even a fly would get under a leaf?

I tried to engage sympathy.

'I was doubtful about coming to-day,' I said: 'I have been exceedingly unwell since I last saw you.'

Miss O'Brian looked as sympathetic as she could; but I knew her thoughts were on that brooch!

'I am so sorry;—so glad, however, you came. It is so much better to rouse oneself than to shut oneself up.'

Better for me—to rouse myself! I thought not. I began to doubt if it were better for Miss O'Brian, either. I made perpetual mental calculations.

Stooping over arrows—12 times 130—daily; frequently (so she said) double that number.

Might one not nearly as well be a widower or a bachelor? What was the good of a 'strawberries and cream' complexion, if one rarely saw it? What was the good of energy in a wife, if it were all expended in twice 12 times 130 yards?

I began to think I'd better not 'do it.'

Her coolness, in this heat, began to provoke me.

She might be pretty; but weren't there dozens of other pretty girls who didn't shoot?

Her unconsciousness of my not being at the height of enjoyment provoked me too.

A woman should be able to understand one.

Clearly Miss O'Brian did not understand me.

It were weary to relate the stages I passed through, in my wearier marches up and down, at the head of the five young ladies. Determination to 'keep up;' failure in 'keeping up;' and then reckless mirth, in consciousness of such failure.

Heat more and more unendurable, till I felt an almost unconquerable desire to cast off my coat and waistcoat, in defiance of ye manners and ye customs of society. Hang society.

Did not my face express my sufferings?

If it did, no man (I mean not one of the five young ladies) regarded it.

There is no observation so true as this—that everything comes to an end. My sufferings ended; the 'ends' ended: but too late!

'We won't have any more to-day, I think,' said Miss O'Brian.

'Any more!!' *that* did it. A moody, savage feeling pervaded my breast. The five young ladies and my unhappy self returned to the garden and 'main body;' I, as detachment, having gone through forced marches, thirst, sufferings of all kind.

The five young ladies retired to the house to 'take off their things.'

The 'main body' looked cheerful, having 'stayed at home at ease.' That weak Jones, with the pink parasol in his hand, was lying on the grass, looking supremely contented.

'You look warm, Tollemache,' Jones said, just as a man will who isn't warm himself.

No man looks well 'warm.' I knew it; and also who had brought such warmth on me.

'Jolly party, eh?' pursued Jones. Jones viewed it under the colour of the pink parasol.

I don't think I answered at all, except by a growl.

'Aren't you well, old boy?' continued Jones.

I growled again, and moved off.

We went into the house, and I sank on a chair, speaking to none, till there came a rustling of female garments.

As I wasn't going to 'do it,' I was glad when Mrs. Gresham requested me to 'take in' Miss Bramwell.

Miss Bramwell was a very plain woman, of a ripe age; but on that occasion I would as soon have 'taken in' a gorgon as anybody.

I dare say she found me disagreeable.

Most likely.

My head was racking; my appetite gone.

I cast a gloomy eye on Miss O'Brian, who began with pickled salmon, and went through the dishes steadily. Her appetite wasn't gone.

I believe she would have been hungry (and cool) after going through Sahara on foot. I was a regular (delicious metaphor!) wet blanket.

I scowled so at the footman who brought me food, that he (being but a lad) shook violently.

I crumbled bread and ate it. I drank cold water.

Miss Bramwell looked alarmed. Was I subject to fits? and one about to come on?

'Aren't you well?' she inquired, anxiously.

'No; I'm never well in this con—I mean, this very disagreeable climate. I'm going back to India, or somewhere, to-morrow.'

'Where?' said the surprised lady.

'Anywhere,' I answered, viewing Miss O'Brian engaged on lobster-salad. (She could eat lobster-salad!!)

Miss Bramwell made a note—'clearly touched,' and turned to her other side—to my supreme indifference.

She was so pretty; and yet I could not have her!—12 times 130, frequently double, and practising for the Grand National!

The Jack Spratt argument would not apply here. I must give it up,

and ought to be thankful I had discovered in time.

She would have been a widow in a year.

The ladies left us. Jones was overflowing with old college tales, and appealed to me once for corroboration.

I said I knew nothing at all about it.

'Jones,' I said, 'let us go home it's very slow.'

Jones didn't find it slow, and didn't wish to go. He was ready, after the champagne, to turn over any amount of leaves at the piano, and dance, as the advertisements say, 'if required.'

He remonstrated, 'It's so early.'

'Late enough,' I said: 'at all events, I'm going.'

It was my dog-cart, so Jones had to come too.

I said good-night to Mrs. Gresham, whom I met in the hall, while Jones went in for handshakings with the young ladies.

'Nothing wrong between you and Miss O'Brian?' inquired Jones, as we drove off.

'Wrong! oh lor, no; and, by the way, I was very much obliged to Jones, but I should have to leave next day.'

Jones was aghast.

'Without doing it?' he said: 'it's expected.'

I wasn't going to unbosom myself to Jones. I took no notice of his remark.

'I was told to-night,' I said, 'that it was your brother who was married, and not you; and that Miss Marsh (she of the pink parasol) thought you meant something.'

This was a settler to Jones. He had his own affairs to think of. Good heavens! if Mrs. Jones heard it!—that anybody had thought he conducted himself as if he wasn't married, and 'meant something!'

I left next day; and my relapse came on at Babbicombe-on-Trent.

As I lay tossing, my own ills almost banished the image of Miss O'Brian.

'Ah!' I thought, 'it was not with me *le premier pas qui coute*; it was those 12 ends!'

IL CAFFÈ GRECO.

'I am quite familiar at the Chapter Coffee House, and know all the geniuses there.'—CHATHAM to his Mother.

I HAVE had some experience of cafés in different parts of the world. In England there is not much opportunity of studying the subject, for the café is an institution that is eminently foreign, and is never likely to find favour permanently in this country. With us a café is somehow associated with smoking, domino-playing, vagabondism, atheism, red republicanism, Mazzini-ism, and similar disreputable tendencies. There are in London but few cafés, for one cannot recognise as such the Early Breakfast House, nor the Alma or Balaklava Coffee House, where, in the famous words of Sir Robert Peel, 'the tired artisan recruits his wasted energies with abundant and untaxed food' (in the shape of huge schists of bread and butter, diluted by a decoction of burnt barley, which he is accustomed to regard as coffee)—'the sweeter because not leavened with a sense of injustice;' that is to say, he knows perfectly well what he will have to pay, a tariff of what the French would call 'consumings' being very conspicuously emblazoned in gilt letters on a green ground above his head. I say it would be folly to confound these places with the café proper, any more than one would those establishments where they profess to give you 'café as in Paris,' that article being dispensed to you across the counter from a suspicious-looking machine—something between a tea-urn and one of M. Robin's conjuring tricks—which is professedly constructed on scientific and hydraulic principles, and consequently (as you will discover if you imitate the sensible resolve of 2500 families and buy one) is very apt to get out of order in the hands of unscientific maids of all work.

There are, to be sure, Verrey's in Regent Street, and Pursell's on Cornhill; but these are chiefly frequented by foreigners, the former by French, the latter by Germans. There are also numerous cafés of all

nations thickly sprinkled about the neighbourhood of Leicester Square, where shaggy exiles of various shades of chiaroscuro, in wonderful costumes, in which hoods, frogs, and braid are most conspicuous, beguile their weary hours with an infinitesimal amount of refreshment and an unlimited amount of tobacco, dominoes, and cards. Occasionally, passing along that part of the New Road that extends from Old Street to the Regent's Canal bridge, you may see on the fanlight of some house that has been successively in the occupation of a stonemason, a preparer of objects for the microscope, a coal-merchant, and a photographic artist, the words 'Café de l'Orient—Billiards;' but if you pass again in the course of a week's time, the chances are that the café has disappeared, and the house is again in the occupation of either the stonemason, the preparer of microscopic objects, the coal-merchant, or the photographer, the last being generally the longest tenant, particularly if he adds to the attraction of the largest portrait in London for your money a clean and easy shave, or a shot with a rifle at a range extending from the front parlour to the end of the back garden. These establishments, however, are mere exotics, sickly plants that feebly vegetate under our uncongenial sky, and it is only across the Channel that cafés flourish in their pristine vigour.

I remember well my first sight of a café abroad, at Dieppe, the Café Suisse, at the angle of the *place* that looks on to the harbour and the principal street, where are the shops in which they exhibit those wonderful carvings in ivory that all the English buy as souvenirs of their travels. I remember well how I was struck with the queer green doors, that looked as if they had been made out of superannuated Venetian blinds, the cushioned seats, the marble tables with the little bits of green baize, where noisy men,

principally *en blouse*, were playing dominoes, or vociferating over those thin greasy cards that are the stock properties of all French cafés. But most of all I was struck with the wife of the proprietor, who was seated in the midst like a sort of female *Æolus*,* at her little comptoir (a feeble imitation of a Parisian one), surrounded with all manner of quaint looking-glass, and with two large urns, one on each side, for the deposit of the receipts. I felt a respect for that well-dressed lady almost amounting to awe, and wondered at the effrontery of the artisan with a long clay pipe, who was carrying on an interjectional conversation with her, apparently quite unconscious of the dignity of her position. Since then

* Much have I seen and known: cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments;

until I have long ceased to wonder at anything; but my recollection of that little café remains as bright as ever. Equally distinct and clear are my first impressions of Italy, which I received at the café attached to the railway station at Susa, at the foot of the pass of Mont Cenis. Shall I ever forget tumbling out of the diligence in the early dawn, and finding myself in that low dark room with a ridiculous little stove at one end, round which the travellers cowered, tired, dirty, and taciturn? Shall I ever forget the strange feeling I experienced at seeing the railway time-table printed in Italian, and the word '*birra*,' which was displayed in large letters on one of the columns; or, going out into the delicious morning air, how the Alps looked like mountains of raspberry ice in the early sun, and seemed so near that I could hardly believe that it had taken me a whole night to traverse them?

I have sat in the café on the heights of Heidelberg, the Neckar winding at my feet; I have taken coffee at Genoa at the Concordia, among the trees and flowers; I have watched the bulls and bears from the Café de la Bourse at Paris; I have drunk '*orzo di Germania*' at the Caffé Doney at Florence, along

* '*Celsa sedet Æolus arcê*,'—Ving.

with the *élite* of the Florentines, and have made the acquaintance of Borrascino, the famous dog, who has become one of the celebrities of that city, and whom everybody sees, as one does the Pitti Palace and Masaccio's frescoes. There is a French story of Moustache, the dog of the regiment, who followed the Grande Armée through its Italian campaigns, and, having lost an ear and a paw in the service of his country, was rewarded with a cross and a berth in the Invalides. Borrascino, however, enjoys a more extensive reputation. Moustache was but the dog of a regiment, but Borrascino is the dog of a whole city—the dog of the Florentines. He is rather good-looking, black and tan, with long silky hair and a very intelligent face. It is said that he belonged to an Austrian artist, and, on his master dying, the dog refused to attach himself to any one in particular, but commenced an irregular vagabond life, visiting chiefly among the artists and the trattorias, never staying more than one day at the same place, but having his head-quarters at the Caffé Doney, where he passes the best part of his time, in the winter coiled up under one of the seats, and in the summer basking in the sun on the steps in front, blinking indifferently at the gaily-dressed people, who drive up to eat their ices at the door, in company with a large number of elaborately got-up young gentlemen, who never seem to have anything better to do than Borrascino, and who are not half so handsome or intelligent as he. Borrascino is always accompanied by a black, ugly, good-tempered little cur, something like the old-fashioned turnspit, who follows him wherever he goes, just as James Boswell did Dr. Johnson. This black slave enacts the toady and biographer in a most ludicrously human manner: he is most humble and abject, apparently quite conscious of his own ugliness and of the other's superiority, and yet quite happy and self-complacent that he should be allowed to share the well-gnawn bones of his more highly-endowed friend. He always waits

until the other has dined, when he is allowed to enjoy the reversion of the bones and the least savoury morsels; and if, sorely tempted by something thrown to him, he occasionally forgets himself so far as to commence eating without permission, he is reminded by a significant growl from Borrascino, and with an apologetic wag of his tail, and a most absurdly resigned air upon his dingy face, he retires into the background, the very picture of a poor relation at dinner. The mid-day meal ended (at Florence most people dine early), Borrascino proceeds leisurely to the Caffè Doney, just as a Christian would to take his coffee and enjoy his siesta, his biographer lying by his side and making a pillow for him with his back. Homer sometimes nods (just as musical amateurs do at German princes' operas), 'le roi s'amuse' at times, and even Borrascino occasionally condescends to unbend, and allows little liberties on the part of his companion. When I saw the little black wretch playfully pulling the larger dog by the ear, apparently to induce him to display himself, I was irresistibly reminded of Boswell and his eternal 'What is your opinion, sir?'

Borrascino Johnson would sometimes allow himself to be 'drawn out,' and with something of what you might imagine was his biped prototype's manner to Beauclerc, when he exclaimed out of window, 'What! is it you, you dogs! I'll have a frisk with you,'* he would for a time permit the playful familiarity of his dependant; but this generally ended in a growl from Borrascino, upon which the other immediately resumed his former respectful attitude.

I have visited Floriani's, on the piazza at Venice, but cannot say I

* 'Beauclerk and Langton had supped at a tavern; it came into their heads to go and knock up Johnson, and see if they could prevail on him to join them in a ramble; when he discovered who they were, and was told their errand, he smiled, and with great good humour agreed to their proposal. "What, is it you, you dogs! I'll have a frisk with you."'
BOSWELL, p. 199, octavo edition.

know it well, for it was never a favourite place of resort either with me or my companions—chiefly because smoking is not allowed; and its gorgeous rooms and well-dressed company were slightly out of keeping with the rather eccentric costume we adopted during our residence in 'the City in the Sea.' It was winter—and a very bitter winter it was. The snow fell thickly in the very first day of November; the lagunes were filled with ice, the gondolas were covered with hoarfrost, and looked like twelfth-cake ornaments, and the east wind blew even more cruelly than it does either in Paris or London, and that is saying a great deal. I was at that time travelling with Mackerkincroft, son of the Professor of Phlebotomy, at the East Lambeth University, and on our arrival we met with O'Mulligan, a painter from the Sister Isle, and Gurgoyle, a violent thirteenth century architect, whom we had left at Rome. Mackerkincroft and I excited a good deal of attention on our arrival in Venice, from the eccentricity of our costume. Mack, who when he first came out sported a pair of whiskers of wondrous length, which had been the admiration of Bedford Square and all the west side of Upper Gower Street, had, since his sojourn in the East, grown a magnificent beard and moustache, of a delicate straw colour, which gave him quite a formidable look, and would have made him appear quite savage, had it not been for his soft blue eyes, which predisposed everybody in his favour, the women most particularly. He used to wear a broad-brimmed felt hat, which had once been white, corduroy trousers of marvellous amplitude at the hips, and burnt all over into little holes with lucifer-matches, a paletôt with an enormous hood at the back, and a most extraordinary complication of buttons and loops in the front, and a pair of boots which he had purchased along with, I think, four other pairs for three francs and a half—which was certainly cheap, but they smelt most outrageously. I wore a black felt Roman hat with a very high crown, an overcoat which had never been

fashionable anywhere at any time, trousers of the pattern Lord Brougham used to affect, and a large English plaid, which I wore in the Roman manner—that is to say, across my shoulders, with the ends wrapped round my body. Mackerkincroft used to smoke his cigar in the leg-bone of a turkey, scraped clean, as is common in the Romagna; and these peculiarities, added to our decidedly foreign appearance, caused us to be regarded with much curiosity by the Venetians; but when Gurgoyle and O'Mulligan appeared at the caffè, one snowy morning, in the enormous great coats and berretti, or caps worn by the Chiozzote boatmen, they were fairly dumbfounded. Gurgoyle had for a long time had a longing for one of these coats, which certainly are very picturesque (for 'costume,' he said), and I ran some risk in endeavouring to make bargains for him with the boatmen who loitered about the Piazzetta for the sale of their coats off their backs. These simple folk could not understand how anybody could care to buy their old clothes of them, and generally resented my inquiries as chaff—much the same as a London cabman would do if you were to ask him what he would take for his hat. I remember one old fellow, who sold olives at a caffè near the Piazza Santa Maria Formosa, informing me, on my admiring his coat, that it had been his father's before him, who had worn it nearly all his lifetime, and he had himself worn it nearly forty years. I have no reason to doubt his sincerity; the man could not have gained anything by telling an untruth, and I had not broached the subject of purchasing the coat, although I had initiated the conversation with that view; but I felt, after what he said, that it would almost amount to profanation to urge him to part with that which had been in his family so long, and which I could readily understand he regarded with some degree of reverence. Baffled in his attempts to get a coat in which the colour had been properly matured by age, my enthusiastic friend induced O'Mulligan to accompany him one

morning to the Riva de' Schiavoni; and they both made their appearance at Caffè del Padiglione, at the back of the Piazza, where we breakfasted in the manner I have described. These coats gave them both an infinite deal of trouble: their unusual colour (dark brown, with broad scarlet stripes at the seams, and elaborate embroidery of the same colour round the pockets) rendered them disagreeably conspicuous, and the texture of the material was so coarse and stubborn that you could not double the coats up nor hang them upon pegs in the usual manner, but you were obliged to lay them out flat like some enormous dried fish. I do not know if Gurgoyle ever got his coat to England; I rather think he did not; but O'Mulligan, being an artist, and of a more stable mind than his companion, carried his successfully to Ireland, and used his coat to some purpose in his picture of 'An Episode of the Roman War of Independence—Garibaldi pursued by the Austrians off the coast of Chioggia—Midnight,' which for some unaccountable reason was refused by the Royal Academy last year, but which I had the gratification of inspecting, along with a select circle of friends, at the artist's studio in Rowland Street, Fitzroy Square. The reader will readily imagine that we hardly felt ourselves at home at Floriani's, or at any of the other of the swell cafés of the Piazza San Marco, and we therefore usually resorted to those of less pretentious aspect, although, it is true, we sometimes took our evening coffee at the Specchij, or the Café of the Mirrors—so called from the looking-glasses round the walls; but, for my part, I confess it was always with a certain shame-facedness, and a consciousness that my dress was open to disparaging reflections.

We rather preferred the 'freer and easier style of a little café down a labyrinth of streets, between the Ponte San Moise and the Marionette Theatre, where, in 'the dead unhappy' winter weather, we used to play billiards in the morning by gaslight, and drink Kirschwasser

—a villainous compound introduced by the Austrians, and which, like the 'fire-water' of the 'pale-faces' among the North American aborigines, is already playing sad havoc with the delicate, temperate organizations of the Venetians. There was a smart little waitress—a Triestina; and Gurgoyne, influenced no doubt by that same divinity who on one occasion (testè the inscription at Antwerp) made an artist out of a blacksmith, used to attempt to converse with her in her own language; but I never remember that he ever got any further than saying, 'Give me ein glas Kirschwasser,' which he was perfectly satisfied was most classical German, to which the damsel would reply, 'Si, Sior,' and so the conversation ended. Here, in the quiet moonless nights, the sober Venetian citizens returning to their amphibious homes would be startled by the strains of 'O Strasburg, O Strasburg, du wunderschöne Stadt,' or 'Ich hatt' ein Kamarade,' and issuing thence, when the streets were deserted by all save the Austrian patrols in their grey overcoats and tight blue leggings, some of the wildest spirits would make razzias among the dangling signs of the Merceria or the Calle Larga, or perform wild war-dances under the solemn shade of the Procuratie Vecchie.

As to Naples, there is scarce a café there that I do not know, from the Caffè di Europa down to the humblest on the Marinella, and I have even patronized the sellers of iced water at the street-corners. The Europa, I well remember, was very expensive, and the ices there cost nearly half as much again as elsewhere; but the additional expense was well repaid by the opportunity it afforded of studying young Naples 'at home.' There it is that you see him to perfection—frail, pale and languid, with thin cruel lips and sunken eyes, dressed in what was the height of fashion two or three seasons before in Paris or London, with delicate-hued gloves on his hands, enamelled boots on his feet, and an ivory-headed cane between his long, white, wolfish teeth. Gurgoyne used to draw cari-

atures of him on the white marble tables, and ridicule him to his very face. This was in the reign of Tiberius Caesar, who was then shut up in solitary state in that stronghold whence his successor was lately shelled out by the Piedmontese. Arrests took place daily; sbirri were at every street-corner; spies in Protean disguises watched your every movement, laid wait for you at cafés or trattorias, or public promenades. Every man shrunk from his neighbour, not knowing but what he might be in the pay of the government; and yet Gurgoyne did not scruple to profess openly the most ultra-liberal sentiments, and would shout out aloud in the Toledo, or in the Largo del Palazzo, under the very windows of Majesty, 'B-o-m-b-a! Bombay! and on our remonstrating with him on his imprudence, he would reply that the Neapolitans did not understand English, so it did not matter what he said.

As I write, what crowds of reminiscences arise connected with cafés in different towns, at Portici, Salerno, Vicenza, Padua, Bologna, Ferrara, and many more! At Padua there is a very handsome café, 'the Caffè Pedrocchi,' which is one of the sights of the place, and is 'done' regularly by the English in the same breath as the Palazzo di Rogrone and Giotto's frescoes in the arena. The Caffè Pedrocchi is, however, really a fine building, and is much better worth seeing than many of the modern churches in Italy, which Murray describes with such gusto, and which travellers examine, book in hand, like brokers checking an inventory, and, like them, perfectly satisfied, so long as everything mentioned by Murray is in its place; but directly anything is missing, the whole party becomes agitated; books are collated, heads are shaken, custodes interrogated, and the indifferent travellers resolve themselves into an enthusiastic commission of inquiry. It is in vain that the custode assures them that the article in question was removed by the French, or disappeared during the troubles of 'quarant'otto: they believe Murray

rather than him, and take their leave of the custode with a firm conviction that they have been imposed upon. An amusing Frenchman, who wrote a flippant little book entitled 'De Paris à Venise,' says, 'Murray is the tyrant of English tourists. Not one of them allows himself to experience a sensation unless it be foreseen in the guide. Murray has set down beforehand every impression which it is proper to receive. It is said that every man takes his pleasure where he finds it: the English takes theirs where Murray has found it for them. Whatever be the age of an Englishman, or his temperament, or his social position, or his scientific gravity, he will ascend the Rhigi because it is written that he must ascend it;' and the author adds simply, 'it may be that we are barbarians—we do not ascend the Rhigi.'

However, I have strayed a long way from Padua and the Caffè Pedrocchi, which, as I said, is really a fine building, both externally as well as internally. The roof is supported by handsome columns of scagliola in very good taste, the tables are marble, the seats broad and luxurious, and the walls are decorated with maps of different countries, painted in panels, and in some cases, if I remember rightly, executed in relief. This café is memorable as having been the scene of a barbarous judicial murder some years ago, the troops having fired upon a crowd collected in front of the entrance, killing one man and wounding several others. It takes its name from its founder, one Pedrocchi, a Paduan, who, while the building was in progress, paid the workmen every evening in ready money, and, it was said, in old Venetian gold. He had been in indigent circumstances, and lived in a ruinous old house on the site of the present caffè, which, falling into decay, he was obliged to pull down. Suddenly, he abounded in riches, and many stories were current concerning hidden treasures he had discovered, and of yet more awful things which would furnish materials for a terrific legend. The

secret of his wealth was this—he kept a gaming house.

But by far the most interesting café in the world is the Caffè Greco at Rome. There are many others bearing the same name, in different towns in Italy, and there are others more magnificent; but they all fade into insignificance beside their great prototype of the Niobe of nations. There is a Caffè Greco at Sienna, opposite the Loggia of the Casino dei Nobili, which is very well in its way. I remember it well, from the circumstance of the walls being papered with a very pleasing device, representing a gentleman in the costume of the seventeenth century handing a lady, in no costume to speak of, into a gondola, with a water landscape and a dome in the distance, which was repeated all over the rooms in a way that only nightmare could emulate. There is a miserable imitation of the Caffè Greco at Rome, near the Piazza Navona, calling itself the 'Ancien Café Grec;' but the Caffè Greco is, like the Italian monarchy, one and indivisible: there is but one Caffè Greco, and I will be its historiographer.

The Caffè Greco is situate in the Via di Condotti, which runs from the Corso into the Piazza di Spagna, and in the very midst of the English quarter. Externally, it is of unpretending aspect; it will not bear comparison with the magnificent cafés of Paris, or even those of Milan or Turin, nor even with others in the same city. The Caffè Nuovo is larger; the Caffè of the Piazza Sant Luigi dei Francesi is much handsomer; and there are many more which indulge in much more display, as well as affording greater comfort. I remember well how disappointed I was at my first sight of it. A plain, quiet-looking house, with two broad windows, a glazed door, with a narrow side-entrance adjoining, a marble tablet, with the words 'Caffè Greco' over the ground-floor. Could *this* be the Caffè Greco, about which I had heard so much? this the chosen rendezvous of the genius of all countries? this that famous symposium of all nations? Forbid it painting, poetry, positive philosophy! It is so, however, with everything at

Rome; your first impression is a feeling of disappointment. I remember that, when,

'Along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,'

I saw the dome of St. Peter's looming through the rain, after a long, wet journey by diligence from Civita Vecchia, I doubted at first whether it could be indeed Michael Angelo's masterpiece, it looked so small. I did not feel even the commonplace emotion Byron ascribes to Don Juan on approaching London. A French *feuilletoniste*, M. Amedée Achard, who (fired no doubt by a noble emulation of Edmond About) devoted some six weeks to the investigation of Italy and the Italians, explained the reason of this disappointment, which I give in the original, partly from the difficulty of translating it properly, and partly to show that I am perfectly conversant with French periodical literature. He says:—

'Des vieux habitans de Rome, les vieux habitués aussi prétendent qu'il y a dans la ville de Cæsar et de Sixte Quint un charme particulier, dont à leur insu les voyageurs qui s'attardent aux bords du Tibre subissent la mystérieuse influence. Ils ne s'en peuvent détacher et s'ils s'en éloignent, c'est pour y revenir.

'Mais pour que ce charme agisse, il faut d'abord avoir comme on dit ici surmonté les tristesses de Rome. La phrase dit bien la chose. Cette tristesse qui sort des pierres, des ruines, des vieux pans de murs, des fûts des colonnes, des pavés antiques, cette tristesse qui est comme la sueur de temps et qui nous enveloppe tout d'abord est lente à se dissiper. Mais aussitôt que cette impression première a disparu Rome est, dit on, comme ces femmes qu'on aime d'autant plus qu'on a d'abord detestées.'

There is a tale told of Pope Pius VI. that when foreigners came to take leave previously to their departure, he was accustomed to inquire of them how long they had been in Rome? If they replied only a few days or a few weeks, he used to say 'Addio,' because he was sure he should not see them again; but if

they had been a longer time, he would say, 'A rivederci,' which may be freely translated, 'To our next merry meeting,' feeling sure that they would soon return. This, too, I can corroborate, from my own experience, for I left that city I entered so indifferently with a tenderness and yearning akin to that with which one parts with a relative or dearest friend.

The Caffè Greco consists of four rooms, all opening one into the other, and a small room at the side, approached by the side-entrance I before alluded to, communicating, however, with the rest of the café. The first and largest room may be likened to the Court of the Gentiles of the Jewish Temple, or the somewhat analogous Galilee of the early Christian churches; for, just as the stranger and the catechumen assembled in the immediate neighbourhood of their co-religionists without taking part in their ceremonies, so here assembles a motley multitude who apparently have no idea of what is going on in the adytum or inner recesses of the building, and who sip their coffee and smoke their cigars just as they do all over Rome—in fact, all over the globe, for that matter, at least, where there are cafés. I could never make out what could be the attraction to these exoteric disciples, for they did not appear to know each other, or to have any object in coming there rather than to any other café. Such speculations, however,

'Demand arithmetic beyond my forces;'

and as Virgil said to Dante when he bothered him with his questions—

'Non ragioniam, di lor', ma guarda e passa;'

that is to say, let us pass on into the second room, 'or, 'counting the outer room as that of the

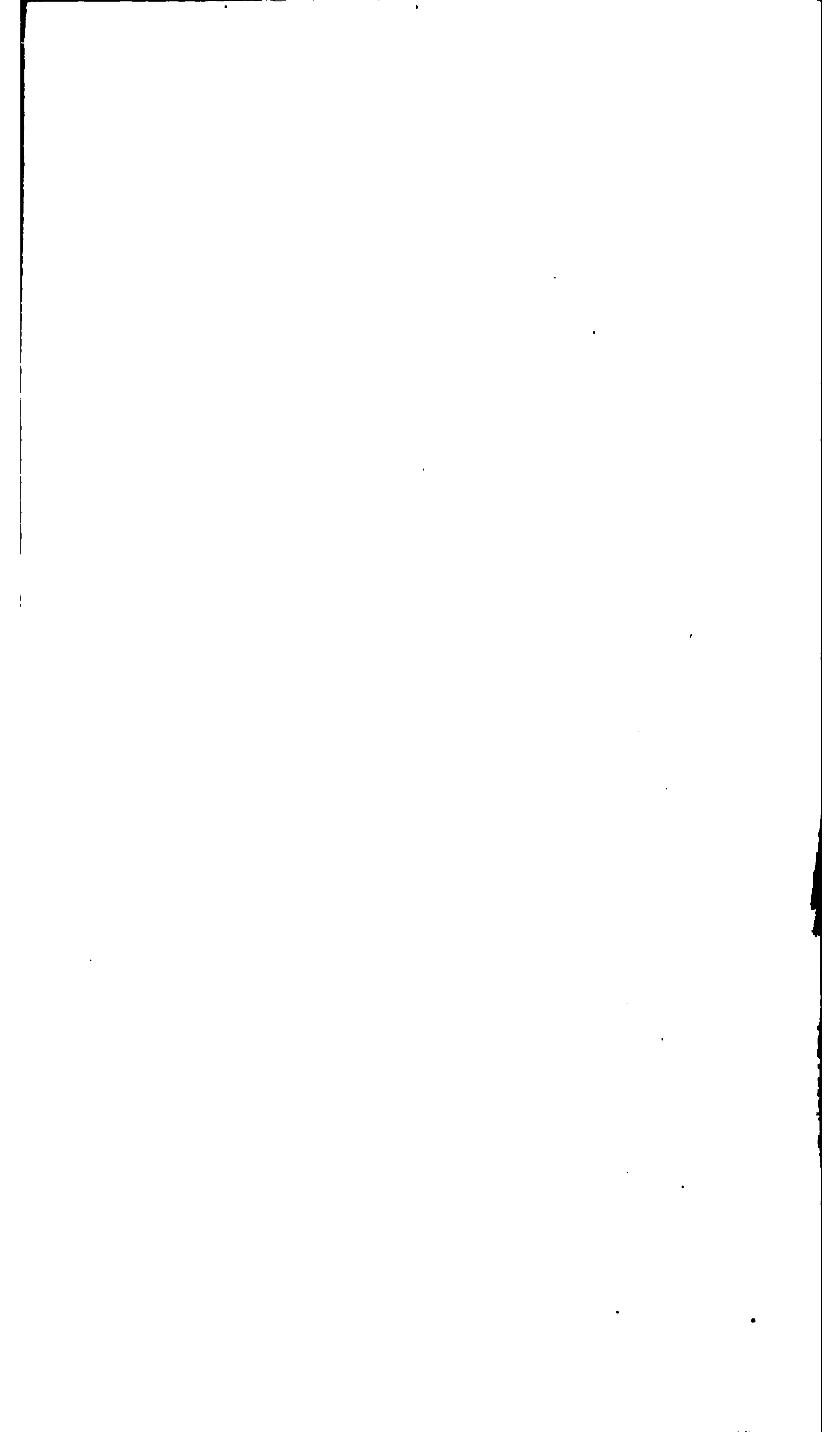
'miser modo

Che visser' senza infamia e senza lodo—'

what the Florentine calls

'Il primo cerchio che l'ablasso cigne.'

On entering which, to continue the similitude (you perceive I read Dante in the original) you are greeted with,



'Diverse lingue, orribili favelli

Voci alte e fioche e suon di man con elle ;'

just as met the poet on his entrance
to 'that queer place which nobody
mentions,'

'Where, in lieu of woodblocks and such modern
inventions,

The Paving Commissioners use "Good Inten-
tions."'

This is the Russian room (for at the Greco each nation has its room), and here the children of the Czar congregate nightly and talk vociferously. They are nearly all pale, fair men, with long hair and moustaches, and are, for the most part, of gentle presence and quiet manners. I do not remember that they ever inquired for train-oil, as they were commonly supposed to do during the late war, but took their coffee like other Christians; and if ever they indulged in the luxury of candles as an esculent, it must have been at their lodgings; and a very expensive luxury it would be, for candles, as well as all other means of enlightenment, are considered in Rome as superfluities, and pay a high import duty as such, and are consequently dear. That little man in the corner with the dog at his feet, is Beerowsky, a very respectable painter, but better known at the Greco for the skill with which he forms circles from his mouth in tobacco smoke. He can, when the coast is clear, emit twenty or thirty of these rings, one after the other, extending quite across the room, or will send one circle dexterously through another, like a conjurer at a fair, in a way that is wonderful to behold. Gauchemain, the English paysagiste, who is very clever at that sort of thing, tries very hard to emulate Beerowsky, and would rather, I think, admit the Russian's superiority as an artist, than in the art of making smoke rings, but his rings are square compared with Beerowsky's, and lack the finish and proportions of the others. Gauchemain has, however, this consolation, that he is the better painter of the two, at any rate.

If by this time you have got accustomed to the smoke proceeding from some hundred 'sigari forti'

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and the Babel of tongues around you, we will follow Giovanni, the waiter, who is waving a tray full of tiny cups in one hand and a coffee-bigin in the other, and making his way with continual exclamations of 'Con permesso,' or, 'By your leave,' into the next room, which you will find has been taken possession of by the British, and which, as you may surmise from the character of our countrymen, is the best room in the café.

Let us take our seat in the corner by the door leading into the passage, and we shall be able to see what is going on. 'Giovanni, due caffè; and mind, do not bring my friend superior coffee, as if he were a stranger, because he understands all about it.' I say this, gentle reader, because they are accustomed at the Greco to bring new comers their coffee in porcelain cups, for which, although the quality of the coffee is the same, it is dubbed 'caffè superiore,' and is charged two baiocchi and a half, instead of one and a half, which is the usual tariff. Giovanni smiles significantly, replies 'Bene,'—good, and 'through the wild serf he cleaves his way;' that is to say, he rushes by Beerowsky, who is standing in the doorway talking to Otto Schweyer, and presently returns with our coffee on a little tray, in a tiny little pot, with a glass of cool, clear spring water from the neighbouring fountain in the Piazza di Spagna. He is a civil fellow, Giovanni; all through the season he is incessantly balancing trays, and distributing coffee, martozzies, mezzo-caldos, &c., without receiving any gratuity from the habitués, except on New Year's Day, when he presents you with a small bouquet with your coffee, and wishes you a happy new year, in return for which civility you present him with perhaps a couple of pauls—about 10*d.* English.

'Eviva, Giovanni! More power to your elbow,' say I.

'Live long ere from thy topmost head

The thickset hazel dies;

Long ere the hateful crow shall tread

The corners of thy eyes.

'Live long, nor feel in head or chest

Our changeful equinoxes,

Till mellow death, like some late guest,

Shall call thee from the boxes.'—TENNYSON

By this time you have finished your coffee. Try a cigar, and let us look round. Who is that thin, grave man, with grizzled beard and overhanging brows? That is Gibson, our English Phidias, the prince of modern sculptors, and the noblest Roman of them all; a man who has certainly done more than any living to revive in our own day

'The glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.'

You are lucky in meeting him here; he comes but seldom, as he does not smoke, and is of quiet, retiring manners. He is talking to Dr. Gerard Grand, who does not smoke either, but who, notwithstanding, comes as regularly as clockwork, every evening, to chat for an hour or so, and leaves with the same regularity. Grand has a house, that is to say, a flat, in the Via Babuino—which he lets furnished during the season—and a very respectable gallery of pictures, which is one of the sights of Rome. He is a discriminating patron of art, and, I should say, derives more profit from his picture-dealing than the practice of his profession.

That tall young man with his back towards you, in that enormously tall Roman hat, is Smirch, nephew of the artist of the same name, who used to paint those charming little pictures of the Campagna. His uncle is dead; but he has left sufficient reputation for his nephew to live upon, and he has now entered fully into his inheritance. The young gentleman is not much of a painter; but he makes up for his deficiency in that respect by eccentricities of costume and behaviour, which he seems to think must eventually make him known. He wears the tallest hat in Rome, and in summer comes out in a complete suit of buff. I remember once meeting him at Pisa; his hat was buff, his hair was buff, his coat, waistcoat, and trousers were buff, and even his shoes were of undressed leather and the same colour. He looked like an underdone photograph exactly. He has been known to hire a carriage for the day, and drive about Rome with it filled with pictures, in

order that everybody might know his profession; but I do not know if he received any commissions in consequence. He is not, however, extravagant, despite his eccentricity, but occupies a modest apartment ('over the water,' as we used to call the Trastevere—the Transteverino of the old Romans) in Borgo, near the cathedral, and is simple and quiet in his habits. In fact, in Rome, it is difficult to be anything else. You may smoke cigars all day, and it shall not cost you more than five-pence, or play billiards all night, and it shall not cost you five shillings, or go to the opera, and it will not exceed two shillings in the pit; and even should you take to drinking whiskey and water, which is considered the summit of extravagance, Mr. Lowe, who keeps the English shop at the corner of the Piazza di Spagna, will supply you with the spirit at the rate of a scudo, or 4s. 2d. English, a bottle.

So Stockdove has asked you already to one of his evenings; I thought he would, he asks everybody. He and his brother have a large studio in the Via Felice, where, twice a week, the elder gives what he calls 'evenings,' that is to say, tea and coffee, and readings from popular dramatists. Tuesdays are reserved for ladies and the nobility (so he says), while on Thursdays, when he receives artists and his personal friends, smoking is allowed; and, as they say at the French *salon bourgeois*, 'une tenue décente n'est pas de rigueur,' that is to say, you go anyhow. Stockdove senior thinks he resembles the Swan of Avon, and at these readings comes out in Elizabethan costume consisting of a black velvet doublet and crochet collar. He is a better reciter than he is a painter: he never seems to get beyond charcoal sketches, with which the walls of his studio are covered; nor is his brother much better, who will show you a few black scratches on a piece of tinted paper, and coolly proceed to tell you that it is a study of a grand view of Rome from the Pincio, which he intends to paint some day or other. 'This,' he will say, pointing to a couple of parallel lines near the bottom, 'is the balus-

trade of the Pincio, which will form the foreground; here I shall introduce a few figures—an Englishman, an Irishman, and a Scotchman, symbolically distinguished; in the middle-distance is Rome; here are the two churches at the entrance to the Corso; this is San Carlo; this is St. Peter's; then I shall introduce (which is perfectly allowable, you know, although you cannot see them) the Arch of Titus and the Coliseum, and in the extreme distance are the Sabine hills and Monte Mario. Don't you think that will make a fine picture?"

Talboys is a great chum of the Stockdoves, and you will usually see him at the evenings, reclining in a picturesque attitude on a cushion in the foreground, smoking a Turkish pipe. Talboys is brother of the judge, and author of the tragedy of 'Ænone,' and is, consequently, not quite so young as he would seem. That is he sitting at the corner of the further table talking to Plummer, a young-faced man with grey curling hair; his chalk heads are very clever, and you may usually see several of his productions in the Miniature Room of the Royal Academy. He and Plummer are old Romans, and wherever they go in summer always return to winter in Rome. Plummer's pictures of Roman life are very pretty, and deserve to be better known in England; his 'Twilight in the Campagna,' in last year's Academy, was quite a masterpiece in its way; but his name, though 'stirring to all the men of Rome,' is not much known out of it, and so Giorgio's pictures do not sell as they really deserve.

That fair man with the straight beard, wrapped in a plaid, is Gelattley, the sculptor; you may remember to have heard of his bas-reliefs in the Egyptian manner. 'Moses in the bulrushes' created a great sensation at the time, as did 'Joseph with the wife of Potiphar;' and he is now engaged upon a colossal work, for a tomb at Athenborough, illustrating the passage of the Red Sea and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host. Everything he does is conceived on a gigantic scale; he is, however, himself an extremely mo-

dest man, and will welcome you to his studio to-morrow as if you were conferring a favour; and I can tell you it is well worth a visit.

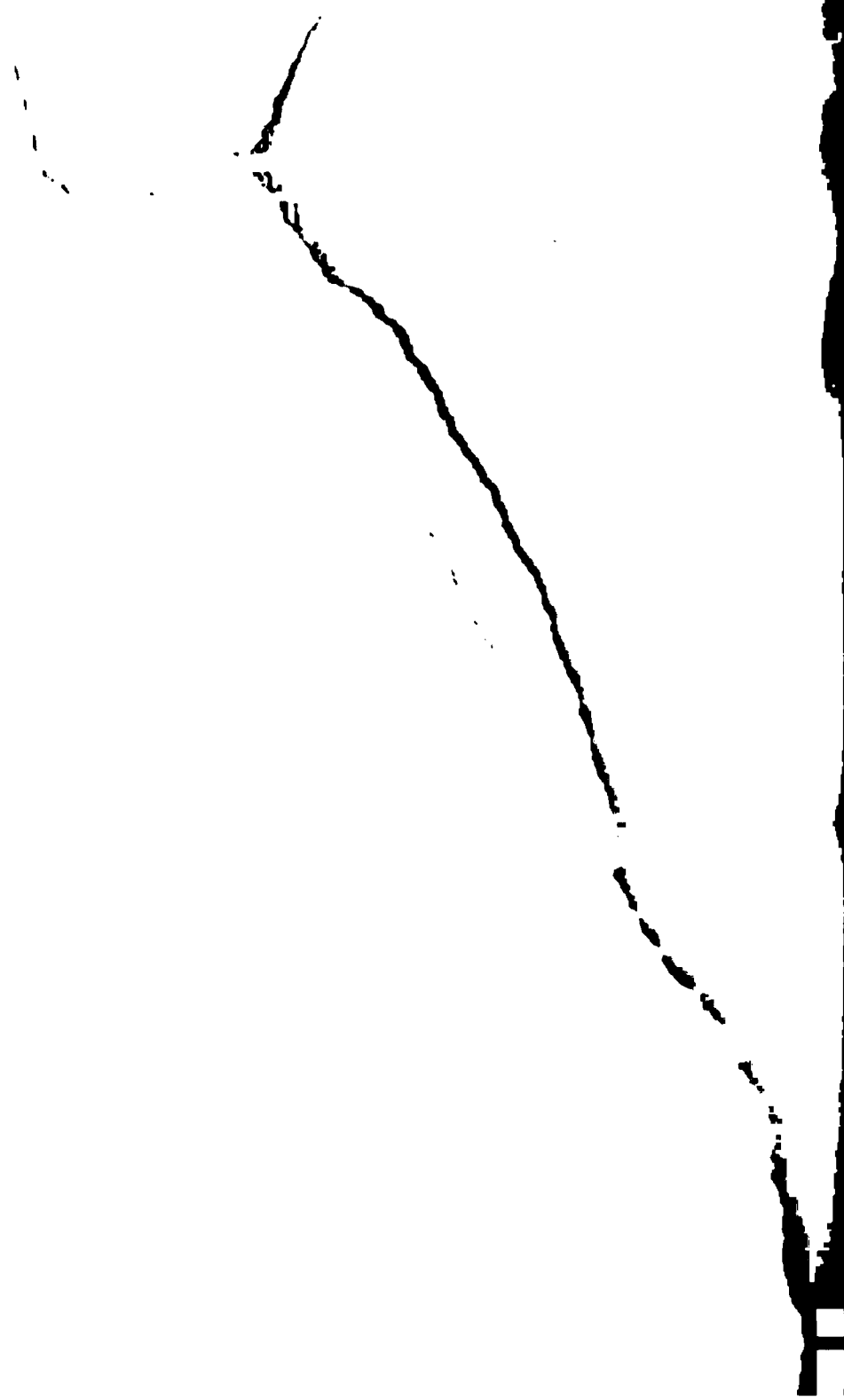
That stout thickset man with the red beard is also a sculptor, but you can hardly class him with Gelattley. You may tell by his accent he comes from the Sister Island even if you did not hear his name, which you would scarcely take to be English. O'Dowd is quite a curiosity in his way: he is always hard-up, poor fellow! and will most likely borrow half a crown of you at the first opportunity, and at the second will persuade you to sit for your 'boost,' as he calls it, which he will execute at an unusually low figure. Sir Thomas Lawrence made his fortune by the tender melancholy and air of refinement he infused into his portraits; and O'Dowd in the same manner so refines upon your features in his 'boosts,' that you are tempted to exclaim, with that elderly gentlewoman who was so shamefully treated by one Stout, a tinker, 'Lawk-a-mercy on me! this is none of I.' I remember once visiting O'Dowd at his studio, and found him smoking a very short clay pipe, and working away assiduously at a little model in clay. This was a bust, and he was very desirous of obtaining my opinion as to the likeness, which was, he said, somebody I knew well. I examined his work, but could not trace any resemblance to anybody I knew, either male or female; so I behaved as usual on such occasions—I put my head on one side, re-treated a few paces, and examined the model attentively, and declared (*che Iddio mi perdoni*) that it reminded me of somebody, but for the life of me I could not tell of whom. It turned out that it was my old friend Perso, whom O'Dowd had persuaded to allow him to liquidate a long-standing arrear of half-crowns in this manner. I have no doubt that O'Dowd saw Perso's 'visage in his mind,' that is to say, in the mind he made up to have his 'boost' taken; but I cannot help thinking that in order to insure a faithful portrait, there should be an absence of all present pecuniary consideration between the artist and his sitter.

That fair man who has just intimated that he intends 'to cut his stick' is neither an Englishman nor an artist, although he always passes his evenings here. He is an Italian, and a teacher of languages, and he frequents the Greco in order to perfect himself in the conversational delicacies of our mother-tongue. He certainly speaks English very well, and has picked up a great many slang phrases, which he uses whenever he can, in preference to a more polished form of locution, as you have already had an example. That silent young man with the erysipelic shirt-front is also a Roman; he is studying English, as is the fashion now, and comes here to accustom himself to the sound of the language; but, although he has been here all the winter, he has never yet been known to open his mouth to speak English; and as the artists are not, as a rule, very familiar with Italian, and regard him as an interloper, he sits in that corner without taking any part in what is going on. We used to fancy him a spy: if he be, I only hope he conveys faithfully to Cardinal Manteucci our good wishes towards him, when 'Galig-nani' arrives, as it does not unfrequently, with three parts of the sheet excised by the pontifical scissors.

Ah! here comes Gurgoyle with his sketch-book under his arm; he is always late, and has only just dined. He will tell you that he has been meditating among the tombs of the Campagna and has found no end of work. He is not very well up in the archæology of the subjects he describes, and is not very sure if the sketch he has got is the tomb of the Empress Helena or of Aruns the son of Porsena; he even admits that it may possibly be the resting-place of the Horatii and Curatii, for what he knows or cares; but, at any rate, it is one of the finest things he has seen in Rome, and, with the exception of some small tomb in Soapey Minerva, as he irreverently terms the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva and the frescoes of Raffaello in the Farnesina, is the only work he has considered worthy of his pencil. Gurgoyle is bigoted, perhaps, but to a certain

extent he is right; and although it may seem heretical to say so, the real art-treasures of Rome may be almost counted on your fingers.

Are we going to the Life Academy this evening? Yes, we are going with O'Mulligan, who made a tremendous sketch of the model last night, which he is anxious to finish. O'Mulligan is not here, however; but we shall possibly find him in the French room, which is a long narrow room at the extremity of the café, lighted by a skylight. That is he talking to the little pale man with very black curling hair and beard, whom, you will observe, limps with one foot as he rises to greet you with a graceful compliment in the very purest French. The Frenchman is M. Arouet Levi, a Jewish gentleman, and a very promising artist. He devotes himself to religious art, and his frescoes, illustrating the Life and Miracles of Saint Philomela, in the church of the Blue Carmelites, are really very fine, and are imbued with a thoroughly devotional feeling. Levi's studio is hung round with studies of incidents in the lives of the saints and martyrs, and you generally find a muscular Roman model suspended by a pulley from the ceiling, who is intended for one of the angels bearing Saint Somebody or other somewhere, or else his housekeeper perched on a chair placed on a table, who figures afterwards as the Madonna enthroned, surrounded by cherubim. His rooms are strewn with 'Lives of the Saints' in French and Italian, and narratives of miracles that have received the approbation of the Holy Father, and is perfectly conversant with the hagiology of the Church from beginning to end; but, if it be necessary to believe in what he represents, I am very much afraid that M. Arouet Levi is wanting in that necessary qualification, and that his life and conversation is hardly so consistent as that of one Angelico, a painter and monk in the convent of the Badia at Fiesole. You will not, however, see anything of M. Levi's real character at present, for he is a man of the world, and knows well that language was given to man to



Drawn by Paul Gray.]

TO A FLIRT.

"Pause, Lily, cease thy cruel sport;
Send foolish hearts unharmed away;
Go shalt thou find a husband's sheltering arm,
Here sober autumn turns thy hair to gray."

conceal his sentiments, and you will hear nothing but the most proper and edifying discourse from his thin, bloodless lips.

Very different from him is the sturdy Alsatian Jerome, who is sitting on the opposite side of the room. Jerome is rough in manners; his speech is rude, and I incline to his own belief, that he speaks Italian better than his own language; but he is a brave, noble painter, with all his heart in his work, and, what is still better, a trustworthy, honest fellow. He pays no compliments, Jerome: he used to quarrel with my French, which he said was execrable, and asserted I only understood Dante 'brutalement,' and condemned what I considered my most successful sketches; but, for all that, I would rather he should smite me friendly, and reprove me, than receive the elaborate compliments of M. Levi. Jerome is a pupil of the French Academy, and obtained the grand prize in 1839 for his picture of 'Socrates drinking the Hemlock,' and he would be a full-blown painter this year were it not that a severe fever for a long time entirely incapacitated him for work.

Those two quiet little men who are conversing together are also students of the French Academy in the class of architecture, and are

engaged upon a restoration of the castle of Saint Angelo, formerly the tomb of Emperor Hadrian. You will observe that the Frenchmen all wear their hair cropped closely, and they talk much louder than the English; and there are generally two at the end of the room, as there are now, engaged in a wordy discussion about some trifle or other.

There is a general movement among the British: some are going to the Life Academy, some to Gigi's, or some other private school of costume, to get up the materials for scenes at Grotto Ferrata, or Tivoli, or Italian peasants at a shrine, or reposing, or dancing, or carousing, or doing something of the sort, as they do annually on the walls of every exhibition in the metropolis.

Wrap your plaid carefully around you, for the Roman nights are chilly. The patrol (consisting of one pontifical gendarme, and two French soldiers to take care of him) plods steadily through the gutter down the middle of the street; from the distance comes the monotonous chant of a passing funeral; the shops are all shut, the streets are nearly deserted, and in the Piazza Trajana

'The bearded grass is dry and dewless.

Let us go.'

J. H.

TO A FLIRT.

OH, soft, grey eyes that gleam so bright!
Oh, happy voice that rings so clear!
Oh, sunny face all lit with smiles!
To me how sad, but yet how dear!
Caught in your toils, among your spoils
I rank, and my poor heart now swells
The fatal list of conquered swains
Your beauty's wondrous power that tells.

Ah! hapless day when first on you
I gazed, when on the croquet lawn
Your little feet tripped o'er the grass,
As light and graceful as a fawn.
No rest for me now e'er will be:
Still in my ear that merry scream
Melodious sounds; before me glides
Your presence like a pleasant dream.

Would that a dream it were: and would
 I ne'er had seen your face, so fair
 And yet so false! Your words, poor fool,
 I trusted then, nor saw the snare.
 At me you smiled, and I, beguiled,
 Thought not I but a pastime made
 For you to while away the hour,
 As at your feet my heart I laid.

Oh! my Lily,* mine no more,
 Could you no better pastime find
 Than this poor heart to win and break
 And leave it languishing behind?
 Ah! cruel heart! A bitter smart
 You left, if this sad truth to know
 Will please you aught; perchance you love
 With broken hearts your path to strow.

Tell me, Lily, tell me truly,
 When on a winter's night, alone
 Thou sitt'st, all dark, nor sound is heard
 But dripping rain and cold wind's moan—
 Tell me if then before thy ken
 The spectres of thy lovers pass—
 Wan, haggard men, whose lives thou'st wrecked,
 And left a bruised and shattered mass!

Oh, shame upon you, Lily, Lily!
 For once let honest crimson dye
 Your cheeks; there's much to make you blush,
 And bring the tear-drop to your eye;
 For while you laugh and blithely quaff
 The cup of pleasure to the full,
 For you there's many a manly brow
 Clouded with care, with sorrow dull.

Look round you, Lily, Lily,
 Hark to the reaper's harvest song,
 As mid the sheaves the sickles flash
 The yellow autumn fields among.
 Earth seems to bound at this glad sound;
 Ripe-rosy apple, mellow pear,
 The purple grape, the golden corn,
 With grateful fragrance fill the air.

And can you, Lily, while each breeze
 That with your brown hair stops to toy
 Breathes forth its glad Æolian song
 Of fulness, happiness, and joy—
 Can you delight, with cruel spite,
 Sadness alone round you to see,
 And blighted peace and withered hope
 While Nature claps her hands with glee?

Oh, Lily, Lily, surely not!
 Oh, say, not yet is turned to gall
 That sweet young heart, nor true love ye
 Is banished from it past recall!
 Thou'rt in thy spring; with joyous wing
 Thou gaily flitt'st from flower to flower.
 But spring is brief, and summer o'er,
 Sunshine soon flies and chill clouds lower.

* A literal translation of a common English name.

Oh, listen, laughing Lily !
 The leaves that formed our summer shade
 And graced the trees with emerald crown,
 Soon withered, brown and sere shall fade.
 Go on thy way, but think, some day,
 Fair one, thy autumn, too, shall come.
 Like these shall fade and fall thy charms,
 Who'll ask thee then to share his home ?

Lily, in thy spring-time stay a while ;
 Think on the autumn of thy life.
 If thou pursu'st thy wayward course
 When wilt thou e'er become a wife ?
 Pause, Lily, cease thy cruel sport ;
 Send foolish hearts unharmed away ;
 So shalt thou find a husband's sheltering arm,
 Ere sober autumn turns thy hair to grey.

J. W. D.

MORNING VISITS.

IT has often been said that the small trials of life are the hardest to bear. This may sound paradoxical, but nevertheless there is a considerable amount of truth in the assertion. It may arise from their perpetual recurrence, or that from their very insignificance we make no effort to meet them. Still, whatever is the cause, most people can recall some period when the fret of their daily life has tried them more than a real sorrow. Among these lesser evils we may reckon some of our social duties. These often harass us greatly, and have the same irritating effect on our minds that gnats, or any small teasing insects have upon our bodies. They make life one general discomfort without causing any particular suffering.

Take, for instance, the necessity for paying morning visits, and especially for paying them in the country. When life is at the best so full of annoyances that are unavoidable, it strikes us as almost absurd that in this age of civilization and selfishness we should have such a tax imposed upon us, and it might be well to consider if this arbitrary law is absolutely necessary. Is there no hope of its ever being repealed ? At present the framework of society seems to hang upon it, and it would be thought impossible to keep a neighbourhood in the bonds of fellowship if this time-

honoured custom were infringed. That they are a grievance is universally allowed. Miss Berry calls morning visits the 'abomination of desolation.' Did any one ever announce an intention of devoting a day to them in any tone of satisfaction ? Was it not, on the contrary, moaned over, bewailed, detested ? and is it within the range of possibility that such intercourse can lead to any agreeable result ? You order the carriage on some cheerless December day, and, after perhaps a seven miles' drive through a bleak or hilly country, you arrive cold, miserable, and somewhat peevish at your friend's door. You listen eagerly for the servant's reply as to whether Mrs. A—— is at home. 'Yes, will you walk in ?' Of course she is at home,' you mutter indignantly ; 'she would not be such a fool as to go out on a day like this,' and you glance up at the leaden sky, from which a few heavy flakes of snow are slowly descending. Would, you think, that you could emulate that self-possessed young gentleman who, when told by the servant that his uncle was at home, had the presence of mind to answer, 'Is he, then I'll call another day,' and in this happy disposition you follow the servant into the drawing-room. It looks cold, cheerless, and uninhabited ; and if your visit is to some country parsonage, or to any one to whom

economy is an object, there is probably no fire, and the servant dexterously inserts a match between the bars of the fireless grate, before informing the lady of your arrival. You sit for some minutes, which seem to you interminable, alternately looking over a few smartly-bound books which radiate from the middle of a round table, and watching the small flickering flame of the newly-lighted fire, which has no effect whatever beyond emitting faint puffs of smoke into the room. It would take two hours for that fire to burn up. At last Mrs. A—— appears in an old gown, and very fine cap, evidently hastily put on, and a good deal flustered by your unexpected arrival. You greet her with a chilling smile; she is absent and fussy: topic after topic falls to the ground, till you feel utterly vacant and idea-less. At last your evil genius prompts you to hope that the dear children are well, and to opine that they must have grown out of all recollection. Now you have struck the right chord! Mrs. A—— brightens up at once. The children have colds and are all at home; but they are so much grown, and she wishes you so much to see them. You glance at the clock, and see that the twenty minutes you had allotted yourself have nearly expired. You are afraid you must run away now, but it is a real disappointment. In the mean time, however, the bell has been rung and the children sent for. With a heart full of despair, and a countenance exemplary in its resignation, you wait five minutes, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour, while the little darlings are washed, combed, frizzled, and furbelowed. You feel what a waste of time and trouble this is, as in whatever guise they appear they will be equally uninteresting to you; but it has unlocked the floodgates of Mrs. A——'s heart, and her chatter trickles on, lively, meaningless, and uninterrupted. At last the door opens, and children of all ages are ushered in, followed by a most objectionable baby, with a bald head and red legs, which the nurse places on its mother's knee. You try to look at it

kindly, and approach to caress it, but it immediately crams its hand into its mouth, turns its head away, and greets you with a tremendous roar. It is a frightful child, and you feel that the only thing upon which you can compliment its mother is the strength of its lungs. However, you ask its age, compassionate its teeth-cutting, and after kissing two or three of the least objectionable of the brats, you are able to escape, and you throw yourself back in the carriage with an ejaculation of thanksgiving that at least *that* is over! The next visit in your allotted round is possibly to some family recently settled in the neighbourhood, and perhaps few things are more difficult than a visit under such circumstances. You know nothing of their antecedents, relatives, opinions, or politics. You have not even any local interest in common with them, and feel convinced that by some mischance you will be led to discourse upon the one subject that should be avoided. It is quite remarkable how often this unfortunate coincidence occurs. It is enough for some one to have been visited by severe affliction, the result, perhaps, of fire or shipwreck, to make conversation drift into the channel that all are anxious to avoid, and every fire and every shipwreck that has taken place during the last ten years is sure to be raked up and discussed.

As a rule, society is, both easier and pleasanter in a town than in the country, and the necessity of paying morning visits a far less heavy tax upon our time and patience. Tiresome and formal as morning visits are, they are at all events less stiff than they are represented to us in books of the last century, or in the traditions we have of our great-grandmothers curtsying to each other in their stately hoops, and sipping their chocolate, but we doubt if they are not quite as dull. Indeed the very cups of chocolate, which were handed to every visitor, must have assisted in breaking the ice, and these were as much *de rigueur* as cake and wine were a few years ago to those who

were newly married, and who, if not of the upper ten thousand, sat for three days in their wedding clothes to receive visits, before beginning the real business of their life. We should be fortunate if any visit it ever fell to our lot to pay or receive, should equal in humour or amusement that so admirably described in the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' as paid by Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Skeggs, often as we may be inclined to murmur 'Fudge' to the inane chatter and malicious gossip to which we are compelled to listen. We remember a rather absurd incident which happened to a lady from her over-zeal in the performance of this supposed duty. She was living in a part of Scotland where country houses are few and far between, and proposed to pay a long round of visits that would occupy the whole day. Her daughters objected very much to this plan, saying that going without luncheon always made them ill. Lady B—— assured them that she had remembered this difficulty, and had provided for it by arranging that they should be at Castle C—— about two o'clock. 'They will be at luncheon then, and are sure to offer us some.'

All took place as had been settled; they timed their visit just at the right hour, but though Mrs. C—— was delighted to see them, not a word was said about luncheon. She went on talking more agreeably than usual, but her famished guests responded coldly and languidly, for their hearts were set on more substantial fare, and even the newest bit of gossip fell flat and stale. Lady B—— waited as long as it was possible, or that any hope remained, and at last in despair rose to go, but unfortunately gave utterance to the thought that had so entirely engrossed her. 'Good-bye, dear Mrs. Luncheon,' was heard with astonishment by her hostess, and suppressed laughter from her daughters. But even such an unusually broad hint does not appear to have had the desired effect.

Absurd mistakes have occasionally occurred from the similarity of the outside of the houses in many parts of London; such as a man

walking quietly into a house imagining it to be the one in which he had been invited to dine, and never discovering his error till after the soup and fish, when the real guest hastily entered to find his place taken; the family next door, meanwhile, waiting for dinner, and wondering what could have become of their friend.

One of the most ludicrous mistakes of this kind occurred to a very stiff old gentleman who had been with great difficulty persuaded by his wife to call upon some old friends of hers, with whom he was quite unacquainted, and who had recently settled in London. He at last consented, after making very particular inquiries as to where they lived, and if his wife was certain she knew the street and the number.

'Yes, she was only there last week. No. —, in — Street. She knew it perfectly well.'

It was a hot summer's day, and they determined to go out early, and to walk there before luncheon. A sort of doubt flitted through the lady's mind as they entered the street; but she remembered that when she had called there before she had not come through the Park, and so had come in at the other end. She was very careful not to betray herself, and, besides, felt convinced that she knew the outside of the house too well to mistake it.

'That is it, I suppose,' said her husband, irritable from the walk in the scorching sun, and having been dragged out to pay a morning visit, his especial detestation.

'Oh, yes, certainly.' Yes, she felt sure that was Mrs. E——'s house.

'Pray be sure,' he rejoined, testily; 'I should not like to make a mistake.'

But she was certain she knew the house, and the creepers in the balcony; she was not likely to make a mistake.

When the door opened, the servant, and the hall, and the staircase, all looked different; but she concealed any doubts that she felt, and asked boldly if Mrs. E—— was at home. When the answer was readily given in the affirmative, she dismissed her momentary panic, and felt quite at

ease again. Still she was not quite comfortable, the room looked so different to that she was in but a few days before, and two gentlemen were there, talking eagerly, neither of whom she knew. The servant came to say that Mrs. E—— was upstairs, but would come down very soon, so rather nervously they sat down and waited. Suddenly the door was thrown open, and a lady, with flowers in her hair, and a low evening dress, hastily entered. The old gentleman looked up in considerable astonishment, which was increased by seeing the two ladies both stop short in their eager advance to throw themselves, as he supposed, into one another's arms, evidently quite at a loss what to do. At last there came simultaneous murmurs and regrets about 'a mistake,' the lady explaining that she concluded the early visit was from Mr. F——, the celebrated artist, to whom she was sitting for her portrait. Some explanations followed, and, strangely enough, it was discovered that a family of the same name had recently bought a house a few doors off, and this had already caused several awkward mistakes. However, in spite of their annoyance, Mrs. E—— persuaded her visitors to stay to luncheon, and this intimacy, so strangely begun, continued through life.

The facilities of meeting afforded by a large capital, and the great variety of society to be obtained, make it far more agreeable than that of the twenty or thirty families we visit in the country. People who live in a large city are usually fully occupied. They are less prone to take offence, have wider interests, and a larger field for pleasant conversation.

And yet, grievous as the necessity of paying morning visits is, it is less so than the necessity of submitting to the evening invasions to which we are subjected as soon as we have crossed the Channel. On a winter's night in England, when once the curtains are drawn, the lamps lighted, and the family assembled by the fireside, we feel that we have effectually shut out the outer world, that the evening is our own to spend with our books, or

music, or in any way we like best, in the society of those we love, and that whatever causes for sorrow and anxiety we may have, for the time they are laid aside, and that, at all events, we are sure not to be bored.

When English people first establish themselves abroad, whether it is for pleasure or necessity, they invariably miss the look of home to which they are accustomed, and which is England's special characteristic. The very appearance of the house is against it. Stiff, heavy furniture, ranged against the wall, the polished, slippery, and carpetless floor, the total absence of everything approaching to comfort, all preclude it. But, notwithstanding, you do all that is possible to counteract this dreary feeling; you surround yourself with English books; you gather your children around the wood fire, which, at least, is cheerful. You have taken the precaution to bring tea with you, and your own teapot. The room really looks comfortable, and you feel with satisfaction that at last you have succeeded in creating an atmosphere of home. Suddenly the door opens, you hear the cackling of shrill female voices, and three or four lively ladies, in *demi-toilette*, enter in an *empresé* manner, assuring you with great cheerfulness that they are come to spend the evening with you in a friendly way. Utterly aghast at this unexpected invasion, and feeling it anything but an act of friendship on their part, you yield yourself up to despair, send the children to bed, give up your yet untasted tea, and endure two hours' conversation in some language with which you are not particularly conversant, feeling as if there were no more peace left for you in the world.

But does the field of choice lie only between these two evils? Must we sacrifice our mornings to keep our evenings free? If we must, let us at least try and devise something by which the infliction may be lessened.

Why, for example, should not the custom that prevails in London be carried out in the country? When a fashionable lady wishes to announce her arrival for the season, her visiting list is sent to her porter,

or some one deputed for the purpose, with orders to leave her cards at the houses specified before a given day. The necessary form has been gone through; the world is aware of her advent, and out of three or four hundred acquaintances she can select the few she chooses to cultivate in person. Why should not this practice extend to the country, and instead of the tiresome visit and dreary drive, cards might be sent to every house where a visit is supposed to be due, either by post or by a servant? The externals of acquaintanceship will then have been recognized, and any further inter-

course may be avoided or resorted to at pleasure.

There is no reason why society in the country should not be agreeable. A dinner, a ball, a pic-nic, may be pleasant. A well-selected party, staying together in a country house, undoubtedly is. Neither would we depreciate the value of kind and neighbourly interest. Friendship and sympathy, in this cold and selfish world, are far too precious to be despised. All that we contend for is, that these are not attained by the dry formality and hollow conventionalism of morning visits.

H. T.

BRIGHTON SEASONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—A large percentage of 'London Society' having temporarily migrated to the watering-places, I have thought it probable you might like its readers to be informed, through the medium of a veteran beau, how royal old Brighton, the queen of those watering-places, is deporting herself in view of her incoming season.

As you know, Mr. Editor, there are several seasons at Brighton. There is the dancing season, the invalid season, the bathing season, and *the* season. Already this year, the flutter of our round of hops, our standing suppers, our bals costumés, and our other terpsichorean aids, have been left in the far distance. Already, our charades and private theatricals have produced their calculated effect, many of the flames thus fanned and fuelled having ended in matches, instead of the matches ending in flames, as theoretically they ought to do. Already, though the year is scarce into the yellow leaf, we have bath-chaired half the invalids in England; we have restored to a comparative health, and to the superlative joy of two maiden aunts, that hope of his race, Lord Ravenlocks, who had come to us in a wasted condition from Borderlands; we have assisted with downcast looks and pent-up tears, at the gradual sinking of the beautiful Miss de Kaye, until at last

she departed for good and aye from this figuratively desert shore; we have watched too, with sentiments of indignant surprise, the heartless behaviour of the Dowager Lady Heavisides, who, lolling at ease in her chair, would persist in absorbing the promenade, though she was fat and fifty, could walk perfectly well if she chose, and was good for at least twenty more whist campaigns. Already this year, in a word, has our Brighton fulfilled her mission of working wished-for wonders by some, withholding health from others, and fostering obtrusive fancies among not a few. John the bath-chairman, respectfully touching his hat, makes no odds of admitting *his* season to have been 'fust rate.'

Not so the poor bathing women. Lately, I sustained a prolonged conversation with my old ally Mother Neptune, and her trusty aides-de-camp Long Lizz and Pretty Polly. Mother Neptune, having served twenty-eight years in the blue gowns, is still an able marine per mare et terram. You may descry her forces, on any morning between the hours of seven and twelve, thrown out skilfully in skirmishing order, up Regency Square, Preston Street, Waterloo Street, and Brunswick Square, with the strategic purpose of waylaying aspirant mermaids, the moment the light craft heave in sight from their respective ports.

Nevertheless, for some hitherto unexplained reason or other, the actual bathers have been this year scanty in number. Mother Neptune declares, that, in the whole course of her briny experience, she has never known a worse season. She thinks 'the bathing-Quality is a-gettin' tired o' Brighton.' Long Lizz, however, and Pretty Polly, who, like the Emperor, *comprehenent leur époque*, unhesitatingly put it down to 'them London banks, as has smashed such a lot.' Certain is it, that July and August, formerly prolific in bathers, and with unusually good bathing weather through the season just over, hardly sent us any visitors. The continent being closed, unless France and Belgium, where they can all have gone to, is a mystery: but, wherever their whereabouts, it has not been Brighton. Nor am I wholly astonished. Siding generally with Mother Neptune, I go further, and assign a cause as follows.

Though Brighton be justly termed the queen of watering-places, it is anything but the queen of bathing-places. True, landlubbers possess the amplest resources. But, once descend from the promenades, and you have neither the firm sands of Ramsgate or Trouville, nor the outstretch of Scarborough or Biarritz. Nature has been very unkind to this beach. For three ruthless sea-miles your path is one continued stumble over dykes of shingly stones. I never saw a place more imperatively demanding artistic help, in order to make good the defects of nature, and I never saw a place where art less loved her duties. In presence of such a glaringly ill-bred beach, the appliances of art count here as next to nothing. To be sure, the bathing attendants are practised salts, and the very civillest of the civil: but the machines they serve, viewed by the status and wants of Brighton, fall shamefully below par, the greater portion being fit for nothing else but to be drafted off to Rottingdean or Littlehampton. Look at the Ramsgate machines—they are twice the size, besides their superiorequipment. Let our Brighton proprietors educate their bal-

neal minds by visiting Biarritz, or say Ostend: and, if they did but get a glimpse of the 'last thing in bathing-boxes' at Trouville, we might anticipate an extensive hiding of diminished heads. Surely, queenly Brighton deserves something better than thin deal boards knocked together in series. The anomaly were of the strangest, only that stranger exist elsewhere. What city, for instance, stands more in need of good cab accommodation than London? and what city is less provided? So Brighton beach, with its shabby old boxes. Why, Royal George himself might almost recognize acquaintances amongst them, so little since then are they altered. It is said, better days are coming. But when, aye when? When our new pier has rusted through sheer want of wear, when the corporation have finished their ill-timed tinkering at the promenade, when the Hove commissioners graciously vouchsafe to reopen the green that should have been ready last May, when—O desired consummation!—the Cliftonville heiress has come of age, then, mayhap then, will somebody compassionate poor Beachy. But, why wait? Bathers must now walk a long step east of the new pierage, before they can court the ocean wave in a civilized manner, and, even there, the descent includes many unpleasant jolts, and the re-ascent as many desperate pulls. To the west, where I hang out, you have to plunge down semi-precipices in a break-neck sort of a way, or to flounder along through a shingle that reminds one uncommonly of the cinder-field on Vesuvius, only it is thicker, sharper, and three times as deep, less the romance. I have written 'somebody:' but, looking at our beach from an enterprising point of view, my word ought to read 'somebodies.' What do you think, Mr. Editor, of a Brighton-Beach-and-Bathing-Box Company, on the principle of the General Omnibus, 'limited' of course in everything except comfort? One day, as I was lounging about with my esteemed friend Mr. Yeanay, the idea struck me so forcibly, that I rushed home at once to sketch a prospectus. Yeanay speaks very

feelingly on the subject. He says that, since his marriage, the beach has been revealed to him in a new phase altogether, and that, unless he can devise some plan to alleviate the woe it gives rise to, he thinks of quitting Brighton (if *she* will let him, *bien entendu*). In his halcyon bachelor days, he could stroll towards the Albion after breakfast, digest the morning papers, inspect the shops leisurely en route, and return to dress for the band at noon, surveying beach and bathers the while with a remarkably serene front, they being no special concern of his. But now, *quantum mutatus ab illo* Yeanay! for Mrs. Yeanay (*née* Gushington) insists upon bathing at eleven o'clock, and her sposo is under strict orders to escort her, which accordingly he has to do en *négligé*. You should espy the good man of a forenoon, *balancez-ing* and *chassez-ing* down the rugged incline, affectionately arming his better half, who all but calls him a brute, because there are no steps handy—as if it were Yeanay's fault. She will have it, though, that 'it is the fault of *some* odious man or other.' And, as our neighbours *outrémanche* say, *c'est un peu vrai*. Yeanay murmurs lovingly, though feebly, 'If all those endearing young charms.' But the flattery is too transparent; and, when he has toiled through the Vesuvian shingle, half dragging, half lifting, the *ci-devant* Gushington up to her bathing-box, almost like Cassius bearing his Cæsar from out the Tiburian flood, the sole thanks he receives is a stern injunction to be back again in forty-seven minutes exactly, under pain of—he well knows what, that evening.

It was in one of these interludes, the crestfallen hero yet panting from his chivalrous labours, that we discussed together the Brighton-Beach-and-Bathing-Box Company. 'This beach will be the death of me, it really will,' cried poor Yeanay; and I really felt for him, because I know a little of it myself. Although I have not yet married a Gushington, I often chaperon dear Sophia Kate and her arch cousin Ann Jane beachward. On such occasions, one ought not only to be amiable, but

to go in for fascination; and accordingly, when opportunity offers, I hum impromptu 'The Canadian Boat Song' or 'We've lived and loved together.' No go, sir. The chamois darlings skim the ruffled crust, quicker than I tread *terra firma*, leaving me to gasp like Tantalus (for the more one tries to get on, the more one doesn't), till at last, knee-deep in a quicksand of shingle and rubbish, all my prepared tenderness comes to grief, and the baffled suit has to begin *de novo* with either darling. There is their maternal ancestor too, who, in spite of years upon years of residence in Brighton, has never yet been able to bathe, she finds the approaches so reproachable. Brief, the plaint is universal. Sour-souled critics will doubtless say—this is all true enough, but how do you propose to mend it? We answer—that is, Yeanay and I answer—vested interests being respected, only form the company, leave it to work out details, and it must succeed. We think of Colonel Roseleaf for chairman. This is chiefly in deference to his strong fellow-feeling with Yeanay. Still, if we can get Roseleaf to leave off with 'Simla and the hills,' he will be just the man, from the eminent position he holds in connection with Brighton. A company, however, have we must. Otherwise, I prophesy, things will go on in the same jog-trot, till the old-fashioned bathing-Quality, that used to come in July and August, wholly disappears from Brighton.

A month ago we had our races, which immediately forerun the season; and, a week later was our regatta, which is supposed to inaugurate it. The races come too soon to make a crowded course. The regatta was *tol-lollish*: but, they both together launched us right into the season. So that, we have now as much right to cry 'Here we are again,' as though we footed it by privilege at Astley's.

If the bathing season has been wretchedly bad, *the* season gives signs of going to be surpassingly good. Befulkeyed equipages grow apace, sociables stop the way, and mail-phaetons run the rig, while pony-things swarm. Messrs. Pal-

frey and Cobbe, the riding-masters, no longer inquire, 'Who will o'er the downs so free?' To judge from the cavalcades which throng, I fancy the fair applicants for riding-lessons must 'not speak all at once.' When, years ago, I was quartered here in the Plungers, we used to have our rendezvous on the downs, just at the spot above the race-course, where one catches a vista of Rottingdean, you know. And a delightful spot it was. Many hearts must still go pit-a-pat, as they think of the bright eyes that shone, and the soft words that passed there. But now, it is no longer single interviews. The real lady-part of Rotten Row are imported bodily. Such bunchy chignons, such wavy silken tresses, such Diana hatlings, such galloping, such chattering, such 'going into screams of laughter,' and, above all, such true Saxon beauties! Then, such troops of them! It is a haunt, of which bachelors had better beware. As for my nephew Charley, ever since I took him on to the downs, the day after the races, I can't keep the rascal away. He suffers from a tendency to heart-disease, and believes that a stretch o'er the downs invigorates the system. I have known others labour under the same delusion. Toward night-fall, along the seaboard, you can hardly cross the roadway, what with fashionable carriages and gaily flaunting amazons. Now, these damsels must have papas, likewise mammas, and probably grandmas, who, if able to afford equestrian exercise to their progeny, must live in corresponding houses, or mansions as we call them here, and keep up corresponding establishments: therefore, to assume a great influx as having set in, is but simple inference. Indeed, I know for certain that old Yellowboys, who owns sixteen houses in Updown Place, let no less than fifteen of them last week, and at ten guineas apiece. One need but use one's eyes from Cliftonville to Sussex Square, to perceive that scarce a house is to spare, and that, consequently, as Mr. Vellum our agent aptly remarks, 'the prospect of the season is most encouraging. The Cam-

bridge A. D. C. has just been entertaining us in the Town Hall. Particular encomiums would be invidious, where all was capital: but, truly, you might have fancied yourself in the Bijou theatre, for the best of rank and fashion gave presence, beauty outrivalling beauty, and educated wit casting around it that genial life which cheers, rewards, and conquers. Balls hold off as yet: but, my dancing days not being over, I foresee a larger instalment than usual. At a late dinner, our prognostics were canvassed. Major Oldbuck was there, he who used to be 'Oldbuck of the Albany,' before he married the handsome milliner; and the Hon. Long Boman, late of the Light Bobs, now a bore on needle-guns and Sadowa; also, young Reginald Fluche of the Foreign Office, who considers he knows a thing or two about Brighton; and, lastly, though certainly not leastly, that experienced general officer, Lady Jane Makempop, who has brought down her two remaining daughters thus early, that she may take an unimpassioned view of the matrimonial battle-ground, and get them posted betimes for action. Suffice to say, that she and they were in the highest spirits. And, so is every one: for, one and all, we sniff a breezy season.

How then is this? How comes it that our Brighton, seen in its bathing aspect, is undeniably on the wane, while the same Brighton, regarded inland, was never so gay, so rich, and so flourishing? Simply, I take it, because in the one case the means are totally inadequate to the end; and because, in the other, they are all one could desire. We have substantial houses, of every variety, and in immense number; we have shops of all descriptions, thoroughly appointed, some of them noways inferior to London; we have a reach of parades and esplanades, absolutely unequalled in the world; we are lavishly furnished with indoor amusement, and with an outdoor by no means despicable; we are within a short ride of town; our hotels rank among the best in England; there is no town-band like ours in any English watering-place, and, as intending visitors will be

glad to know, our excellent string-band still does duty, morning and evening, on the cliff. Everything townwise being thus as it should be, good prognostics are clearly but the result of common sense and careful adaptation. A similar sense applied to the beach question would, I trow, produce the same results, with but a tithe of the cost and labour. Let us get up a company, and do it.

Meanwhile, our hotels are crowded. Dukes and marquises, home and foreign, abound at the Bedford and Grand, the Norfolk and Albion holding their own as of yore. At conventional hours, the promenades display a galaxy of loveliness, and a *recherché*ness of toilet, that may vie with any resort in Europe. If Dupin could see Brighton in the height of the season, an additional chapter on '*le luxe effréné des femmes*' must assuredly follow. Certes, our yearly dress-exhibition now beginning, if satisfactory to individual purses, is most gratifying to the outer public. Nor is it mere show, as is too often the case abroad. There is a backbone of wealth, and a breeding which stands scrutiny, in the large majority. Of course, exceptions will and do occur in the best regulated watering-places: for example, just see the Miss Levi Hookems, who are so absurdly short that you might think they walked about on their knees, and who sport unconscionably high hats to make them appear taller, with fly-away feathers and most dreadful noses—could *any* man be happy with such misses? But what are a few, by the side of the loveable faces and beguiling paces of the many? Ever and anon, I perambulate by the band, with my young friend Tom Racer, who won so gloriously in the sculling handicap at our late regatta. He has got an eye for the beautiful, a soul for sympathy, and a taste for dress; and he tells me (I am no judge myself in such matters), that he is greatly pleased with several ladies down here. Steeled as I am, I confess to a curious sensation near the region of the *præcordia*, in the case of a family party of charmers. Their mamma would seem to have told them off in two *corps d'armée* (Tom Racer, being a

reading man, calls them the first and second edition), and wherever we go, at all hours, there they are, capering and cantering up and down, as gracefully as gazelles. It does one's old heart good, to see how the dear things enjoy Brighton. All the while, you are being laid siege to terribly. First, it is a *demi-toilette* of the most captivating kind, with nut-brown hair just divulged from papillotes, and neat white parasols. You have hardly time to feast upon the fairy scene—much less to ponder on the consequences of a premature lapse into love—when they are off home, to change for another act. Soon, out trot the little witches again, looking more bewitching than ever. This time, they have enveloped themselves in rich velvet capes, upon which depend chains and crosses, after the manner of lady-abbesses; or it is a pair of faultless ankles, encased in sweetly pretty boots; or, perhaps, delightful little hats, turbaned with cambric, or goodness knows what, to win or else provoke you. Once, when they were passing, I was obliged to be quite rough with Tom Racer, the noble fellow smiled so expressively. I fancied his feelings, however. But that was nothing to what we experienced together the other day on the chain-pier. Thither we went, pursuing the even tenor of our way, as innocently as the babes in the wood, he apostrophizing the ocean à la Byron, your humble servant calm and dignified, in the presumed absence of the charm which enslaves. We had gained the sundial, and I had just asked my friend to take a weed, when an unusual tremor in his voice startled me. On looking up, it was easy to account, as well for tremulous tones, as for the crimson blushes which I saw had suffused the manly brow of Tom Racer. At the corner of the pier-end, ensconced together in engaging attitudes, sat the enchantresses, whom we fondly thought we had left only a while ago in security on the cliff. How they got round before us, unless being sirens they swam it, I cannot imagine: but, funnier still, they had actually been and changed their dress once more. I dared not

closely to examine the new toilet, but we both *felt* it to be divine. Their prevailing colour I know was ultramarine; one had clad herself in a polar-bear jacket, and I'm nearly sure they all wore very nautical caplets indeed. Then, they did take our measure so overtly, and withal so pleasantly, as to create alarm within our bosoms, lest, luring their victims out to sea, they might bundle us, nolentes volentes, into some Scylla and Charybdis we hadn't heard of at school. I rather began to doubt whether mine eyes weren't being made the fools of mine other senses, and whether it was not, chanceways, the Fata Morgana occasionally seen from the Sussex coast. But the spell broke, our goddesses moving at last, the first edition in advance, then—and so prettily—the second edition; whereupon, I was fain to hurry my gallant comrade down the gangway, under pretence of fishing. Venturing to reconnoitre, ten minutes after, the lovely mirage was found to have subsided, and we were enabled to trudge homeward, in somewhat of that sublunary frame of mind which all men are expected to cultivate (O vain hope at Brighton!), no matter how enchanted. Such is life in our season.

To sum up. Brighton is then the place by excellence, where, after the session, statesmen may rest and be thankful; where, in vacation-time, lawyers may wash off the dust of their parchments; where harassed merchants may forget their speculations, and remember their honeymoons; where—such is the balmy climate—the ill may get well, and the well get better; where winsome welcomes are wont to be awarded to wearied warriors; and where even the Ancient Mariner, had he but known of it, might have elevated his spirits 'all in the Downs.' Tom Racer's poetical Edom is a lodge in some vast wilderness, with a small community of love seated demurely beside him. But, in my opinion, it cannot be done for the money. I tell him, if he *will* idolize water-nymphs in the guise of polar bears, he had better pitch his tent *here*. We can unite him to the object of his affections

admirably in Hove Church; after which, she and he can either settle as dormice for the winter, or continue as flâneur and flâneuse along our parade. Brighton affords as much seclusion, or as much publicity, as is good for any one in the nineteenth century. Here the adage is positively true, that 'distance lends enchantment to the view:' for, when the sirens are not on the pier, you can take in the coast from Beachy Head to Worthing in a couple of winks. Here, again, are those who minister to souls diseased at Matins, as also those who minister to greedy-bones at Muttons. Here, we drive dull care away, by tripping it as we go, on the light fantastic toe. Here is no rational enjoyment unobtainable. Here, you may live perpetually retired, from world and business free, and yet perpetually inspect the progress of the arts in female dress, as well as the gems of nature in the wearers. Lastly, it is emphatically at Brighton, that beauty lies in many eyes (though not in eyes alone, but in all that owns them), so that near a life-time might be passed here deliciously, before you had vented to your satisfaction that inebriating question, so vainly propounded each year in the Champs Elysées—

'J'aime les blondes à la folle,
Je ne hais pas les cheveux roux,
Les brunes sont aussi bien jolies.
Qu'en pensez-vous? Qu'en pensez-vous?'

If, then, Mr. Editor of 'London Society,' a verdict be asked on the Brighton Seasons, I say, taking them all in all, may they flourish perennially! The which notwithstanding, I pray those multitudes, who monthly peruse your periodical, to lend us their ears like Roman lovers, or their tongues like British advocates, or, better still, the whole of their John Bull countenances, that success may be bidden to our Company, which proposes to set poor Beachy to rights and to rejoice him in bathing-boxes.

I remain, Mr. Editor,
Yours obliged,
DE LA BECHE BOXER.

1 Cheery Place, Brighton.
Early in September, 1866.

LONDON SOCIETY.

NOVEMBER, 1866.

LOST LOVES.

JUST as every man has a secret drawer holding his most cherished treasures—a tress of hair, a faded glove, a rosette of blue ribbon—so has he an enchanted chamber

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in his heart. It contains many a shadowy form of the loved and the departed. Memory's spell can evoke, and affection clothe them in a moment with all their old perfections.

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The tender mother, the college chum who glided off the Matterhorn, the patient sister laid to rest at Torquay—how speedily do they not live and move once more! Within this chamber lies another, whose jealously-barred door opens only to the key of the arch-magician Love. Think not, gentle public, that I shall show you all its marvels. Not even for thee, wife of my bosom, do its hidden portals open! If thou hast a skeleton in thy cupboard (and what well-regulated wife is without one?), perhaps I have my Blue-beard's chamber, into which it is as well that conjugal glances cannot penetrate. This inner chamber is a man's *sanctum sanctorum*; here he holds the 'sessions of sweet, silent thought.' When storms disturb his domestic quiet without, he seeks refuge in this inmost Avalon, where troubles never stir, where no gusts of passion shake the dreamy waters. This fairyland is haunted with well-remembered smiles and dimples, that gleam on faces once loved but too well, as the moon glimmers on a summer sea; soft voices, to which others now listen, ring through it; dark eyes beam gently there; the perfume of 'lips that are for others' hangs heavily on its air. It was only this morning that certain domestic events carried me thither on the wings of fancy. I was the old Grecian hero, who had passed through many perils from kings' daughters and the sirens of all climes, yet through all those long years I had been true and faithful to my absent Penelope. At length I had safely returned to my craggy Ithaca and my loving queen. How much have the patient hearts of men to suffer! Who could have expected that the spouse for whom I had gone through so much should be sharp-tongued and shrewish? The breakfast was not 'well-spread;' through some default of mine she could not 'put away the desire of meat and drink,' to use the Homeric phrase suitable for a heroic meal. What wonder if I fondly remembered Ogygia's flowers and fruit, and dwelt for a moment on the tenderness of Calypso? How delicious the—

'Mr. Moggridge, what are you about?'

'Charmer of my heart, I am only finishing my article on Intellectual Transcendentalism for the "Comprehensive Review!"'

Verbum sap. I must return to common life, it seems—must leave off twining roses in Neera's hair, lest I should have my own well combed for my pains.

Heresy though it be to say so, it may be taken for granted that no man marries his first love. Indeed it is a kindly provision of nature that it should be so. Most men are in love half a dozen times at school, at least three times during their university course, and as often as conveniently may be afterwards, before they are united to her who is emphatically, after this eliminative process, the woman of their choice. Obviously this discipline is good for the man himself. If the blind god's bow twanged for the first time with certain aim, married love would not be the true and ever-deepening feeling that it so often is. (It is pleasant to find an opportunity of thus making peace with society, justly outraged at the foregoing delinquencies.) As for the ladies who have to pass through this crucible of affection, it is well known that it keeps the dear creatures' 'hands in,' to use their own term. Love's ordeal is not very scathing in these days of croquet and picnics; and we are ungallant enough to believe that hearts do not break so easily under crinoline as they used to do under kirtles. It is true that the wife, who eventually must come to most men, has a grievance to a certain extent, when she reflects that she is incontrovertibly not her husband's first love, and it may possibly be not even his sixth or his twentieth. But the thought brings its own consolation, as she remembers her many rejected sisters, and her spirits may rise again at what has been the pride of all true wives from the beginning—that their husbands selected them against all the world besides. After all, first loves are generally very inanimate things, and, romance apart, could not endure for a moment the wear and tear of every-

day life. With as peculiar propriety, therefore, as the Darwinian law of natural selection pervades the physical realms, does the canon hold good in matrimonial matters, that a man shall not usually marry his first love in the struggle for a wife. Granted, that to the eyes of our fair readers such an one is a monster; but ordinary life looks to the prosaic and the practical. It is better for a man to be a moral Frankenstein, and fall in love with this one for her hair, and that one for her eyes, and ring the changes in all the superficial features of affection with a dozen or two of early loves, so that he may finally light on this composite ideal in the person of one, perhaps well weighted with golden charms not altogether unacceptable in housekeeping, about whom, with the utmost certainty, wedded love can flourish in perpetual freshness. We are far from decrying the *preux cavalier* who loves but one and dies for her; such cases, though belonging to a past era, are not unknown at present. We would only point out that the opposite system has also its advantages, which it is as well to bear in mind in the universal outcry made against it by poets and romancers and the sentimental of all ages. By way of dealing a final blow to the theory of first love, it should be remarked that the authority of Plato, with which its advocates often defend it, has nothing to do with the question. Love at first sight was with him a necessary correlative of first love; both were preliminary to lifelong friendship on the highest matters upon which the intellect can engage itself. They had no affinity with that married love which, if to-day it leads to high and noble endeavours, must busy itself to-morrow about making pies and darning worsted stockings.

The natural consequence of the modern plan of much flirting before marriage (to give it its feminine appellation: we men prefer to call it needful experience of the sex) is, that a man possesses a store of lost loves which vie in personal interest with Chaucer or Tennyson's 'Dreams of Fair Women.' Memory leads him, as the Sibyl led Æneas of

old, through Elysian Fields peopled with their well-remembered yet unsubstantial forms. He seems often to be rambling in the picture-gallery of some old-fashioned country house, gazing on the beauties dear to Kneller and Lely. There hangs Helen with the raven tresses and liquid eyes; here is Musidora, with looks full of pensive love; yonder are Venusta and Arny, Lucetta and Mabel, each charming in her own way, once loved, long lost, 'lost to sight,' but 'still to memory dear.' This is a cheap amusement to disappointed bachelors, even if it be somewhat reprehensible for married men to indulge, save in direful extremities of domestic commotion. Perhaps all men are more or less prone to muse over smiles and soft words gone for ever—even to condone hard looks and still harder words from those who have once been loved—when the warm colouring of the past falls upon them, and the havannah of the present transports to a cloud-capped Olympus. It is only a more imaginative form of an amatory exercise actually taken in his melancholy moods by a man I knew at Oxford, when we were fellow-students at St. Vitus's. He possessed an album well filled with tresses and locks of hair from his different loves. 'Ah!' he would say, smoothing a glossy ringlet, 'this was given me in the wood at Nuneham last Commemoration. We dined off pork chops done *al fresco*, gipsy-fashion, that day. I have never seen pig-iron, or eaten sausages since, without thinking of her.' Or, as he caressed a long blonde tress, 'This once graced Julia Pakenham. Poor child! she treated me badly that Long I was reading at Linton. Well, peace be to her *manes*!' And then replacing them all, with a sigh for each, he lighted his meerschaum, flung the book into a drawer, and observed, with all the cynicism of twenty, 'If ticks make one's life a burden, I might sell these baubles to a wig-maker. "They be pretty gauds," as Bacon says, but I regard each one as a hairbreadth escape. When I marry I must have browns: sentiment is all very well for your schoolboy.'

If we have few sympathies for the man of many loves, not the most hardened of old maids can refuse her pity to the man of one lost love. He has usually loved well and truly, may be for years, till death or deceit removed his *fiancée*: then follows a blank, say of ten years; circumstances change; the old scar slowly heals over, and he marries for money or position, after a formal and respectable courtship. Or, perhaps (the case is but too common), the loss of the first love impels him frantically to propose to the nearest lady who cares to take him, utterly irrespective of her disposition, as a maddened beast flings himself in desperation amongst the hounds. Few tales command a better audience than those which tell of a widower's life, while he remains constant, through loneliness, trouble, and sore temptation, to the memory of the lost one. His grief must be felt to be realized. Sleep brings him no solace; rather as a foe than a friend does it visit him. So our great poet finely speaks of the

'Tears of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and feels
Her place is empty.'

Another interruption!

'Please, sir, the tax-gatherer has called for the water-rate.'

How alien the matter-of-fact world around us is to the regions which memory cherishes, where the horizon is never black with domestic storms, but always purple with the distant light of love! Tax-gatherers at present! Shade of Xerxes! have the man impaled for ever thinking of collecting his miserable pelf from us! Why cannot all writers live, like the tettix, on dew, need no shelter but the hospitable woods, and pay their water-rate in a sonnet? Another benefit would thereby accrue to us studious folk, fond above all things of a quiet life—

'Happy are the crickets' lives,
Since they all have silent wives!'

We have spoken hitherto of lost loves from a man's point of view; to complete the subject, a few words should be added respecting

their influence on the female mind. Now we have never served as a love casuist, and yet we flatter ourselves we are no longer 'palmerers in love's eye,' and should know something of that mystery of mysteries—a woman's heart. Dreadful as will be the storm of indignation we are calling down on our devoted head, it is our fixed belief (we will submit to be pricked to death by bodkins in its defence!) that women do not look back on their former lovers with any of that melancholy pleasure such a retrospect must always bring to a lord of creation. It may be that the feminine nature is deficient in this faculty of reminiscence, and rejoices in a larger development of hope than usually falls to the lot of the other sex. Spurzheim is not at hand for reference, but I think he agrees with me. Thus it prefers to be always on the look-out for the prince that must inevitably come one day or other in a woman's life (so they tell us), from Fairyland, rather than waste its gushing affections on those unworthy counterfeits who in past days may have crossed her path and befooled her. Lethe, with its *inamabilis unda*, flows round a woman's heart; no warm feelings pluck out the poor ghosts who lie under its leaden waters, and revive them with their own vital heat: stones are not less sentient of old likings. The stings of offended self-complacency, of indignant pride and wounded *amour propre*, are too powerful in a woman's heart to let her look back with kindly feelings on one who loved her but did not make her his own; so she closes the door against compassion, and arrays herself in a panoply that the next admirer shall not withstand. Woe betide the man who meets her then! Better encounter the Hyrcanian tigress robbed of her whelps, than the woman who has seen six or seven (shall I say seventeen?) lovers slip through her hands, and now nerves herself vigorously to secure the eighteenth! Summon your pipe, your latch-key—all the devices most dear to bachelors—to your aid—or you will certainly be vanquished; be wise in time; evacuate

your position, retire to your club, or you will have to capitulate to the enemy!

One instance occurs to me which shows what female tenacity is. A lady in one of the western counties, whose first love had disappointed her by marrying a rival, deliberately gave out that she would marry him yet; and with all the persistency of the Hindoo, who, to spite you, starves himself to death at your front-door, rented a little cottage near his estate, and resided there, literally laying siege to him, till, after the expiration of *eighteen years*, on a happy day death took off the rival. Her strong will now carried all before it, and before the year was out she had married her old love, the widower. 'Oh! triumph of constancy!' exclaims my lady reader. 'Oh! tiger-like jealousy of women!' says our sex, 'to what straights dost thou not reduce thy victim!' We men, if an untimely marriage had snatched from us the lady of our love, instead of rendering her miserable by an affection which only George Sand would approve, or vexing ourselves by a sentimental celibacy of eighteen years, till death removed our supplanter, should forgive her, and treasure her image, dressed in all its old perfections, in our hearts. Doubtless time would bring its own consolation, and after the lapse of a few years (or months) we should render some estimable creature's existence fortunate by bestowing on her our heart, with a little reservation of that one chamber in it we have spoken of, and that solely out of compassion for her. It would not be good for her happiness that she should pry there. So we say nothing about it, and—dead men tell no tales.

'Mr. Moggridge! I am certain, by your silence, that you are writing some scandal against Queen Elizabeth.'

'Quite the contrary. I am praising your sex for the constancy of its affections, and expect that the ladies of England will appoint me their champion at the Court of Love, for my devoted services on their behalf.'

'I am glad, considering your usual sarcasms, that you are beginning to do us justice at last. If we have one thing to be proud of it is the unswerving strength of our attachments. When we give our heart we give our all.'

'Quite true, wife of my choice; there is nothing that exceeds the warmth of a woman's young affections, except—except—I could not confess it but to you—the ever-deepening growth of a man's love for the partner of his married life!'

Here I wink hard at the opposite wall, and Mrs. M. contentedly resumes her crochet by the fire. If Englishwomen forget their old loves they are undeniably true to their husbands. No essayist can rob them of that distinction. Men wander off in thought to some El Dorado of the past, and live over again the golden days of first love. Some one who has long since been separated from them for ever slips a soft hand into theirs; they look into the depths of forbidden eyes, smooth the hair again that has mouldered into dust for twenty years. This may partake of human infirmity, but it does not necessarily make a man false to the duties of the present when he returns from his excursion into Dreamland. Still he ought to be pricked in conscience if he finds his wife brightening his fireside by her smile, and loving him in waking earnest with all the depth of feminine affection. I must plead guilty at all events. Here have I been waltzing just now that last waltz, which never used to be the last, with Florinda; rambling over a certain purple moor Isabel and I know well in delicious South Devon. Sunset is blazing over the hills and pouring floods of light amongst the heather, but it is hard to turn back home. Next moment I am on Lake Geneva, with a certain fair-haired *mädchen*. Farewell, Marguerite! The remembrance of Kate Dilmont's singing is too much for me.

'That strain again—it had a dying fall:
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour. Enough! no more.'

So we return to ordinary life;

and well if we can all find a trustful wife waiting to receive us. The petty treachery, of which she is all unwitting, draws us the closer together. Among all my lost loves there is none, after all, to compare with Mrs. M. I fear the lost loves of the past would stand me in poor stead were I to lose her. They are unsubstantial and unsatisfactory, though we can pull the strings and

set the pretty puppets in motion as we will. One smile from a living wife is worth a myriad imagined caresses from a man's first love. And so, having atoned for my heresies, I hope society at large, and 'London Society' in particular, will accept my recantation.

'Now, my dear, it grows late; draw down the blinds and give me a cup of tea.'
M. G. W.

THE COMMON SENSE OF GOOD DINNERS.

IT is an acknowledged thing that for persons of moderate means to give a dinner-party is an act of tremendous audacity. How dare they do it? If they *must* do it, for hidden reasons known only to themselves, what fear and trembling, what fatigue of mind, what anguish of imagination is gone through! If the unhappy lady on whom the labour of ordering this dinner falls could only remember what *Madame Bon Gout* recommended, or one of the many wise directions in that invaluable paper, 'Hints to Housekeepers.' Alas! all resources fail. There is the inevitable blue frock-shirted John waiting for orders, and the blank face of the 'good plain cook,' with 'whatever you please, ma'am,' written on its vacancy, unaccompanied by the gleam of any suggestion better than one which we know to have been offered to a mistress in difficulties: 'Please, ma'am, wouldn't you 'ave a 'are a boiled, and a goose for a side dish?' But even to experienced housekeepers—gentlewomen who conduct their home affairs in a laudable and not inelegant way—it has become a very awful thing to give a dinner. They rush here and there for ideas. They scheme some new creation in the way of ornament, which turns out a failure; and a thing that ought to be a pleasure from first to last, begins with a sacrifice and ends with a disappointment. And after money spent, thought wasted, 'time neglected, talents misapplied,' the host and hostess go to bed to sleep

off the remembrance of their martyrdom; and if they are tolerably good-tempered, and very fond of each other, with mutual congratulations that things were no worse than they were.

Now we venture to say that all this is because the common sense of a dinner is not understood.

If you give a dinner, you give an *entertainment*; and an entertainment it ought to be, in the pleasantest sense of the word. It is false reasoning to say that people must come, not for the food, but the company; if you make the people the principal point, why do you mention the dinner, or give the dinner at all? People who say this are merely making an excuse for the bad dinner which they are sure they shall give, simply because they do not know what a good dinner is. And what is more, they are talking nonsense, which never seems to occur to them; for did any man ever pour forth brilliant utterances over a tough beefsteak? Did underdone veal, with oysters just warmed through, and served up with the sea-sand in them, ever suggest any thought sweeter than—well, we need not say what!

But there is nothing really alarming in a dinner. The history of dinners is the history of civilization; and if you, madam, are in difficulties over your intended little dinner, your difficulties arise from your civilized tastes having outstepped your knowledge. To supply the knowledge in which you feel your-

self deficient, you think you must have a cook, who is an *artiste* at enormous wages. But you cannot afford the salary, your means are not equal to such a cook's requirements, and so you think you must give up dinners, or undergo the mortification of giving at least a very imperfect one.

But you are wrong: all the necessary knowledge you can yourself acquire. You need not cook the dinner, but *you must know what a dinner is.*

Having made yourself mistress of this most necessary knowledge, your daily dinners may be the school in which your servant must learn to cook. You are not going to give immense dinners to a large number of people. The headwork, the invention, the divided attention, the great experience, the quickness of thought, the dexterity of hand, needed for a dinner when the variety is almost countless, the succession quick, and the cooking perfect throughout, are things to be paid for, and are undoubtedly worth a high price. But a good dinner for a few people—a perfectly agreeable entertainment—may be had at common wages, and with a fearless certainty, if the lady of the house only understands her own business. A good dinner must not be a perplexity to her, but a matter of mere common sense and educated taste.

We have done with our ancient cookery-books, with tortured poultry, and sucking-pigs stuffed with Spanish nuts. We have no faith in 'the milk of a dun cow' for our creams, neither do we watch to gather our mint at the growing of the moon. All that was before our time, and we only laugh at it. But we hold in real respect the veteran feeders of the days of our youth. We have heard of one, that he always said grace as he conducted the lady of highest rank to the dining-room—'For the food we daily receive may we ever be truly thankful—what a magnificent cod's head!—Amen.' And another—when told by the master of the house, who was carving venison, that it was unfit to eat—uttered aloud an ejaculation of

resignation, 'The Lord's will be done!' Now if, after that, he told the anecdotes and made the *bon-mots*, that were like a part of the old good dinners, over the cold mutton that took the haunch's place, we say he was a good old hero—as, indeed, he was. We sympathise with these solemn diners; but we never wish to see a cod's head, or even a haunch of venison, on any table, though we have not the smallest aversion to *eating* of either of them. Our own dinners are better, smaller, cheaper, and prettier. They are less of a business, and more of a pleasure. They are all that a dinner should be, and something more; a gay sight and scene, and an agreeable entertainment. All this we owe to our modern civilization, to our present-day appreciation of the beautiful. We think it is a result with which our readers are little likely to quarrel.

Common sense suggests, on the subject of good dinners, that your room must be well lighted. The light suspended from the ceiling is undoubtedly the best. The little difficulty that arises from the centre of the ceiling not always ranging with the centre of the table, is now met by the lamp being hung on a bar, on which you can run it backwards or forwards to the position required. Let the whole of the room be brightly lighted; that this should be is absolutely necessary to success.

It is well to have two waiters. Remember that we are considering the difficulties of persons whose means are not large, and so we pronounce in favour of 'parlour-maids,' only ruling that the dresses shall be of soft alpaca, or some material that shall never rustle. Women wait with peculiar quickness and neatness when they have a turn for it, and have been well taught; and one woman, if she has an able hand-maiden to take things away and bring things to her, may wait in the modern way on our modern 'good-dinner eaters,' and neither be troubled herself nor distress her employers. It is to be hoped that this will be received as good news. But our paragon of a waitress must

never be asked to wait on more than six people, and there must be no lack of the things necessary to her work; and she ought never to leave the room. A screen, which will keep the wind from the sometimes open door from being felt, may also conceal a table, to which the active handmaiden may have access; this will reduce the difficulty to almost nothing.

The table must have spotless damask, of course, and the dessert must be laid upon it. A small party should never be annoyed by a great arrangement of flowers in the centre. The lights from the ceiling will enable you to have your flowers in the centre, but it is essential to keep them low, *so as to have all faces easily seen*. Plenty of green and scarlet, if possible, is required, on account of the white tablecloth. A low round glass dish, full of flowers dressed flat, and four little glasses, tall and thin, with drooping foliage, placed close to the low dish, so as to make four corners, has a very good effect.

The dessert should be plentiful, and arranged with attention to colour: trimmed with foliage sparingly, and distinctly: ferns, and ice-plants, with the foliage of the fruit in some instances, as with grapes and oranges, but no flowers, are wanted here. There should be no feeling of confusion when you look at your table: colour at regular intervals, neatness, and even stiffness, is required to produce an abidingly pleasant effect. As to silver, china, and glass—of course our friends with moderate means must use what they have. They need not be afraid of common things, if they will so arrange them as to produce a pleasant effect: but our business at present is less with the furniture of the table than with the food.

As to food, a dinner may consist of three, four, or five parts. We will take the last. There is the soup and fish—there is something on which to employ the guests while the great substance of the dinner is dishing up; then comes this more substantial part; after which appears the game; and the con-

cluding part is made up of sweets, puddings, and pastry. Here are two bills of fare. If you have *two* waiters, *everything* will be handed round the table; and if you have only *one*, and the good handmaiden, then the soup and fish and the substantial joint must be placed before the master and mistress, and helped by them on the plates, which will have to be carried round.

You must never omit to put your written bills of fare on the table. They may be written in the way shown here:—

- | | |
|------|--|
| (1.) | Gravy Soup.
Turbot. |
| | — |
| | Sweetbreads.
Curried eggs. |
| | — |
| | Boiled Chicken.
Quarter of Lamb. |
| | — |
| | Partridges.
Scalloped Crab. |
| | — |
| | Baked Almond Pudding.
Jelly. |
| | — |
| | Ox Cheek Soup.
Fish. |
| | — |
| | Timbales.
Oyster croquets.
Mutton cutlets. |
| | — |
| | Boiled Chicken.
Haunch of Mutton. |
| | — |
| | Game.
Leveret. |
| | — |
| | Souffée Pudding.
Jelly.
Pastry. |

My friend, the lady of the house, is not required to cook any of these things, *but she must know how they ought to look and taste*. She ought to possess an educated eye and palate; and, in our opinion, it is clearly her business to attain to such perfection as shall make her a safe and 'knowledgeable' mistress. Until she has so educated herself, her friends had better not dine with her, and her husband is advised to take *his* friends to his club. But the knowledge is so easily gained, so almost impossible to lose, and so pleasant to possess, that we can hardly doubt its being properly sought after.

Two smaller dinners shall follow here:—

- (1.) White Soup.
 Fried Sole.
 —
 Roll of Rabbits.
 Loin of Mutton.
 —
 Partridges.
 —
 Pudding—Tartlets—Cream.

- (2.) Carrot Soup.
 Fish.
 —
 Calf's Head Hash.
 Leg of Mutton.
 —
 Pheasant.
 —
 College Puddings.
 Tartlets—Ramakins.

Our list of dinners shall close with one for a very small party:—

- Mock Turtle Soup.
Fish.
—
Stewed Beefsteak.
Hare.
—
Anchovy toast.
Pudding.
Pastry.
Cheese straws.

We have used, purposely, no fine names, nor any difficult dishes. Any variety can be made, according to the cook's ability.

You will observe that everything is to be so cooked as to be easily helped. There must be no cutting and carving with the dish held over the shoulder, at the risk of a thousand dangers, and with an awkwardness quite unpardonable.

In these small families common sense keeps tarts and pies for luncheon. Almost the same preparations may appear, as tartlets and patties at dinner, when a dinner-party is collected together. All things should *look well*. It is the eye that has first to be pleased. But the judgment so formed must never be disappointed.

Genius will suggest many excellent arrangements for supplying guests easily with all they want; for such is the aim and end of good waiting. A very pretty dish, representing three leaves of the water-lily, with a flower in the centre, has been lately used, when made of white porcelain, for handing round three vegetables at a time; and

another of the same sort for handing round two sorts of cheese and biscuits. •

Remember that every arrangement for the dinner-table should be made for one end—the *comfort of the guests*. Every one should have water, and dinner-rolls, and salt within reach. A dinner-table for ten or a dozen, with salt at the four corners only, is a melancholy spectacle. Green or rose-coloured glass salt-cellars all down a table have a very bright and pleasant effect, and silver ones may still be at the corners if you like. Of course, if, with your *one* servant you have to place three dishes on the table, when their turns arrive, which require carving, you cannot have your top and bottom dessert-dishes there. They will have to be brought in at the last. As attention will thus be directed to them they should be particularly pretty. The way of carrying out this suggestion may be safely left to the lady's taste.

And it should never be forgotten that no cook can dress even the simple dinners we have proposed unless she is daily accustomed to cook neatly and well. It is fair to the woman that it should be so. She has a right to expect, if she goes into however small an establishment, in a gentlewoman's house, that her education should go on, and that she should get the experience that is more valuable to her than wages. In larger houses it is almost a duty to a woman to *keep her hand* in what she has learnt. 'It is a good place, with next to nothing to do in it,' was once said to a cook just engaged for a friend. 'Next to nothing to do!' exclaimed the woman, taking her stand by the open door, out of which she was going; 'then it won't do for me. I shall lose the practice of my trade!'

Nice cooking is economical. This we assert bravely, and after much thought, honest examination, and good experience.

The young matron who spent all the leisure moments of the honeymoon in writing down in a memorandum-book a list of the dishes that had the *yolks* of eggs in them, and those that only required the

whites, in order to use them with economy and effect, has long before this made her husband's little dinners the envy of his friends.

But we have used a wrong word! Good dinners never made any one envious—they are *all* good, in fact and in consequence: spite becomes charitable under their influence, and envy only an eccentric form of good resolutions. When each dish is so cooked and so served as to make one wish to taste every one of them; when, instead of the old mutton-

chop, we have offered to our gaze a circle of Reform cutlets so excellent that we are ready to vote for Universal Suffrage after eating them, then we know that good common sense has presided over the formation of the good dinner, and that our friend has pleased us because she—as this paper is on the cooking question we especially address the lady—she has wisely learnt *how* to do it, and not given up her womanly studies till she has found out how to do it well.

GRAMMAR GONE MAD;

or, Beginning at the Wrong End.

CURSED is the man that keepeth a pig,' say the Rabbis, 'or that teacheth his son Greek!' The sight of the 'Primer' by the immortal 'Nine' is enough to make us include Latin in the same anathema. For this new Latin 'Primer,' the result of the lucubrations of nine public schoolmasters, is nothing less than an earnest and a formal notification that things never shall be better in our time. All the old absurdities in the art of teaching Latin and Greek are to begin a new lease—and worse; for the old regulation pace, albeit one that sends a large majority to college barely out of the grammar, and never quite into the language—yes, the veritable 'goose-step' is to go on still!

This 'Primer' is grammar gone mad. The grammatical hobby is ridden too hard and too far. Posterity will say, Masters, in those days, were a kind of doctors, who 'poured' learning, 'of which they knew little, into' minds 'of which they knew less.' We have seen 'Geometry for Infant Schools;' but this was only a chart of squares and circles. But the Latin 'Primer,' gravely set forth 'for all classes below the highest,' affords most curious evidence of the fact that nine of the first public schools in England may, at one and the same time, be entrusted to men utterly ignorant of three main points in education:—

1. The nature of the youthful mind.

2. Of the way to teach a language, and the right use of grammar.

3. Of the chief purpose of all school education.

(1.) As to ignorance of the youthful mind.—This book pretends to be a 'Primer'—a first book in Latin—which study is commenced commonly at or before nine years of age. Well, at the very first set-off, the child hears of *cursive* forms of letters, of *spirants*, not only of vowels, but of *half-vowels*, of consonants and *half-consonants*! Our elder readers are already puzzled; what, then, will they say of the next page, where as to the Latin for 'Death is nigh,' the child is taught that 'death' is the *subject*, 'is' must be called the *copula*, and 'nigh' is termed the *complement*! Nor is that all, for the child must further know that 'the *copula* with the *complement*'—the two together—have another hard name still, the *predicate*! Very like Oxford logic.

This is not from 'Punch,' but from the 'Primer,' a book written by one eminent scholar, and approved and believed practical for small boys by eight others. The 'Nine' aforesaid are still at large, and their friends believe them perfectly sane and harmless in other respects.

The country gentleman in Molière's comedy found out late in life

that he had been talking prose forty years without knowing it. We have lived quite as long in happy unconsciousness of the necessity of this philosophy. These hard words are not at all more necessary for learning Latin than for learning English or any other language which our friends will feel it a relief to have mastered without all this mental torture. Yet more thankful will they be to have been born and bred before the epoch of the 'Primer,' when we add that the third page—besides the usual sweets of learning for a child, under the name of adverb, conjunction, preposition, interjection—contains the following new inventions for cruelty to the young white slaves of England:—*flexion, inflection, stem, suffix, character, kindred words, root-character, unsynco-pated.*

We have not picked out these pages because they are ridiculous, but because they come first, and because they are a fair specimen of all that follows. But, talking of the ridiculous, men who know boys' nature, and sense of fun, should have been a little more cautious. In our boyish days we did very well without *copulative* verbs, as also without the following piece of information, by no means suggestive of proper respect for the fair sex. Certainly we did learn, *Homo nascitur nudus*, 'Man is born naked,' which piece of animal history circulated a school story of a merry fellow sent to gaol for saying the Duke of York was born without a shirt to his back. We also learnt, *Urbi pater est urbiq; maritus*, saying a man was 'the father of the whole parish, and the husband of the whole parish,' without adding what was done to him for the same. This the 'Nine' may plead as a set-off; still, the following we do think is rather behind the gallantry of the present generation; *Uxor is parere et parere, parare mariti*. That is to say, that all a lady must expect after she is married, is a life of obedience, relieved and diversified by the pains of parturition, though certainly the husband is bound to keep the children as fast as she has them!

Oliver Goldsmith's schoolmaster

of 'Auburn, sweetest village of the plain,' had one qualification in which the 'Nine' are fatally deficient:—

'He too remembered that he once was young.

Had the 'Nine' recalled the impressions of their early days, they would have known that nice grammatical distinctions are worse than useless, because discouraging to a boy. They would have remembered that their own Latin was learned, perhaps concurrently with rules, but certainly not by virtue of them. We are not singular in this opinion. All the friends we consult, including a Christ's Hospital master of thirty years' experience, bear witness that, save the *accidence* or nouns and verbs, and four or five rules almost too obvious to be worth writing, every page of the old Latin grammars proved useless during school days, and rather curious than edifying afterwards. That this is true of grammar, when considered not as a discipline but as a means of learning languages, we can more particularly testify from a grammatical knowledge of five languages, and also from having written elementary works, both Latin and Greek, founded on the minds of junior classes, while we were engaged in public schools.

After the numerous works lately published in Germany and France, as well as England, and after so much experience acquired by tourists in foreign languages, we looked for the new 'Primer' as a step in advance. We pitied poor school-girls whose brains might still be made to serve as sensitive pin-cushions for Lindley Murray's sharpest pins and needles, and we hoped the 'Primer' augured better things for boys, at least—and trusted that their less fortunate sisters in due time might share the benefits of common sense now to be applied to education. We fully expected a formal announcement that all the practical part of grammar and its aids to memory lay in a small compass, and that nine-tenths at least of so-called grammar should be reserved as easy reading for riper scholars. Great, then, was our disappointment in taking up the

'Primer,' to find 'confusion worse confounded,' proofs undeniable of our second charge,

(2.) The 'Primer' evinces an utter ignorance of the place of grammar in learning language.

Not only this 'Primer,' but other parts of the public school system, proceed on the fallacy that language is learnt from grammar, instead of what is true, that the grammar is learnt from the language. John Locke, no mean authority on the human mind, spoke of the absurdity of teaching the grammar (that is, the structure and analysis of a language) before the student knows a word of the language itself. Grammar to language is an accessory, we admit, but only 'an accessory after the fact;' only when the rule finds words for an observation which the student recognizes as soon as read. Till such time, a rule is neither digested nor applied; it serves as so much mental lumber, and nothing more. All methods of teaching a language are defective but those which begin with the language itself. Translation and retranslation must go on *pari passu* with every noun or verb or part of grammar: you will then make a sensible progress both in language and in grammar, properly so called.

When the student is already familiar with the forms of sentences and the idioms of a language from extensive reading, for which twenty pages of the *accidence* are quite sufficient, the observations of the grammarian form the easy and interesting study of an hour. It is then, and not before, that the mental exercise claimed for classical education begins in good earnest. Grammar also, at that stage, tends to accuracy in the language; but for mere children, the practice of quoting for a genitive or a dative, a rule which commonly happens to be right, is mere guesswork and parrot-gabble, and no mental exercise at all. Parsing grammatically is good drilling, we allow, but only to the extent of a boy's intelligence. But as to the 'Primer,' it is as unfitted to form, as it is to fill, the mind of boys. The term 'primer,' or 'introduction,' is indeed a mis-

nomer; a dose of it will operate like Mrs. Squeers' brimstone and treacle, to take away the school appetite for the day. Many of the rules are so abstruse we ourselves could only guess at their meaning by the examples. Learners can only profit by such rules by the time they have well-nigh learnt to do without them. And this leads us to the third point.

(3.) The 'Nine' evince an ignorance of the first principles of education.—The end of education is to teach the boy to teach himself as a man; to lead him till he can run alone, and let him leave off with an appetite; to form a love of literature, and teach him to find a resource in books. Now the writers of the 'Primer' remind us of men who take a dog by the ears and rub his nose in anything repulsive, or throw him into the water, thinking to make him take to it kindly another day. A duck in a walled pond, it is said, will fall into despair and drown. The weary prisoner on the treadmill feels the labour doubly hard when his ear tells him that he toils for toiling sake, and grinds no corn. The 'Primer' seems formed on the same principles of discouragement. It virtually says, 'Who enters here must give up hope.' The poor boy finds himself as in a wood; he may be whipped round and round, and made to go, but he is never to be gladdened by daylight, or by seeing his way out. The 'Primer' acts, not as a stimulus, but as a caution to a boy. It rises before his eyes as a notice board, 'Beware.' Pains and penalties, 'bubble, bubble, toil, and trouble,' form the leading idea. The Dean of Christchurch gave evidence before the School Commission that after six or seven years of Greek and Latin at a public school, young men commonly come to college unable to translate at sight even simple passages. The 'Primer' system explains it all. Is it true that young ladies can read French from no book but their own? Far from it. We admit that the dead languages differ in facility from the living ones, but it must be admitted the inequality between the performances of our

boys with Latin and our girls with French is rather too great.

Under the 'Primer' system we cannot wonder if many a vow is registered at school to eschew learning to the end of one's days; for the child is set to work in a way contrary to the nature of man, yes, and of beast too. When the fine-spirited horse has once strained at a burthen which will not yield, though you lighten that burthen, it is hard to persuade the noble animal to try again.

Nothing is more contrary to a boy's nature than to appreciate and apply philosophical terms. Boys are quick enough at analyzing or observing the same forms and idioms as they read; but whoever inverts the process, whoever sets a child not to analyze but to generalize, as the 'Primer' does, from rules full of unheard-of technicalities, shows extreme ignorance of a child's mind, and literally begins at the wrong end.

But the 'Nine' ought to know that nature has implanted in boys a certain sense and a capacity for pleasure, and for taking interest in the driest of all pursuits. In all but the very dullest there is a responsive chord, if you can but strike it. For, what Aristotle called *Mathesis*, or the pleasures of acquisition—the delight men feel in a sense of progress and in increasing strength—these are also the pleasures of the boy. You identify this peculiar pleasure as a child laughs with joy when it has solved a riddle or adjusted the sticks of a wooden puzzle. A master worthy of the name will identify the same gleam of natural satisfaction as he sees the boy brighten up when he has also solved the enigma of a Latin sentence, and feels difficulties cleared away, and darkness bursting into light. The beauty and the fitness of Latin and Greek for the training of the mind consist not least in this—that with an able master the steeps are so nicely sloped, the stepping-stones are so many, and the difficulties imperceptibly and gradually decrease. But the unhappy 'Primer' system mars all. It flies in the face of nature, and

scatters to the winds all her kindly aids and tendencies.

A young Etonian (now a Master of Eton) told the School Commission in effect, that as to any moral influence between the master and the boy, the only conductor was the birch. Under the 'Primer' system the birch is the only conductor of mental energy also. The boy must be driven, but not led. If the 'Primer' does teach the young idea how to shoot, it must be on the breech-loading principle, no doubt.

It is no answer to say that the old Grammars had their hard technicalities too. It is small praise that at the present day nine men have produced nothing worse *As in presenti* to waste the time and disgust the minds of boys. We do not say the new Primer is not better than the old for ripe scholars; but it is for the younger classes that it is intended, and for them we say it is the worst, because the most repulsive and unintelligible we have ever seen. The cruel part of the matter is, that since these nine public schoolmasters will virtually inflict the Grammar on some nine thousand private teachers, we here have disgust and mental misery sown broadcast among the youth of England. Years of experience, as boys ripened into scholars, rather in spite of these technicalities than by virtue of them, has taught all with whom we speak, as it has taught us, that words heteroclite, acquisitive, adimitive, and the like, never did convey any ideas to a boy till such time as the ideas came without them. We have a distinct recollection of one rule up at class, and of one cry somewhat similar in the playground, with a once-popular game called 'Hammer, Chisel, and Block.' But whether we said, 'Hi possessivi meus tuus suus,' in school, or whether we cried 'Hi cockalorum, jig, jig, jig!' out of school, the exercise of grammatical intelligence was just the same.

But, lastly, the 'Nine' should have remembered that if the youthful mind is aptly compared to a clear and blank piece of paper, it is no small misfortune to be doomed to enter on the long life before us

with our mental tablets scribbled over with the vilest rubbish and a horrid jargon worthy of Hanwell or of Colney Hatch. Many sensible men will not adopt any of the ingenious aids to memory, objecting to fill their minds with Willconsau, Henrag, and other garbage from Grey's 'Memoria Technica.' Then, good friends, in this nineteenth century what do you say at having specially invented for your dear boy's mind, and paying, perhaps, a hundred pounds half-yearly to make him gabble such stuff as this:—

'Substantives in *do* and *go*
Genus femininum show,
Added to this males must be
Hadria, the Hadriatic sea.
Bldens (hoe) and bidens (sheep) ;
With the feminina keep.'

Such rubbish, intended by its rhyme to be indelibly imprinted on the minds of boys, is in the 'Primer' written or adapted by nine men who profess to regard the culture of mind and the culture of taste no less than the culture of Latin and Greek! For our own part, the moment we read it we were forcibly reminded of Mrs. Quickly, when she exclaimed, 'Harum, horum!—shame to teach the child such words.'

The same error (adverting to the use of grammar) of putting a good thing in the wrong place, and so disgusting the mind you design to form, and wasting valuable time besides, this runs through the whole of public school composition in verse and prose. That youths whose minds are already familiar with prose or verse, and who have a store of the best models and finest pages familiar to their minds,

should be set down to imitate either Cicero or Virgil, is reasonable enough. We should then have satisfactory results at little cost of time. But as to setting children who cannot read a line of Latin to dabble words by rule thumbed out of the Dictionary or Gradus, at ten times the cost of time, and with pain instead of pleasure, this also is, in the true spirit of the 'Primer' system, beginning at the wrong end.

This beginning at the wrong end is the reason that so many school years pass away, and Latin and Greek are like hieroglyphics after all. We know a young lady who had read all the 'Æneid' of Virgil and all the 'Iliad' of Homer by fourteen years of age. This she did accurately and well, with no more grammar than verbs and nouns to start with, trusting to her father's comments on the idioms as they occurred. Had she begun in the 'Primer' system she would barely have been out of the grammars, much less into the languages, if not stopped altogether at the onset. Economize the time wasted at school about grammar before it can be understood, as also about verses and other exercises, before the boy has words for either, and our public schools might begin to teach Latin and Greek in no homœopathic quantities. At present, with nineteen boys out of twenty, the years at school are spent all about the foundation, and one never to bear a superstructure—in short, a school-boy's pursuit of classical literature reminds us of old Mathews' story of the Cockney at the Epping Hunt crying out, 'Coachman, drive me a one-and-sixpenny fare after the stag!'



THE OLD BAILEY.

 THE JUDGE.

THE Old Bailey! Ugly words—associated (in a Londoner's mind, at all events) with greasy squalor, crime of every description, a cold, bleak-looking prison, with an awful little iron door, three feet or so from the ground, trial by jury, black caps, bullying counsel, a 'visibly affected' judge, prevaricating witnesses, and a miserable, trembling, damp prisoner in a dock. The Old Bailey—or rather the Central Criminal Court, held at the Old Bailey—is, *par excellence*, the criminal court of the country. In it all the excellences and all the disadvantages of our criminal procedure are developed to an extraordinary degree. The Old Bailey juries are at once more clear-sighted and more pig-headed than any country jury. The local judges—that is to say, the Recorder and the Common Serjeant—are more logical, and more inflexible, and better lawyers than the corresponding dignitaries in any of our session towns. The counsel are keener in their conduct of defences than are the majority of circuit and sessions counsel; and at the same time the tone of their cross-examinations is not so gentlemanly, and

altogether they are less scrupulous in their method of conducting the cases entrusted to them. The witnesses are more intelligent and less trustworthy than country witnesses. The officers of the court keep silence more efficiently, and at the same time are more offensive in their general deportment than the officers of any other court in the kingdom. And lastly, the degree of the prisoners' guilt seems to take a wider scope than it does in cases tried on circuit. More innocent men are charged with crime and more guilty men escape at the Old Bailey than at any other court in the kingdom; because the juries, being Londoners, are more accustomed to look upon niceties of evidence from a legal point of view, and in many cases come into the jury box with exaggerated views of what constitutes a 'reasonable doubt,' and so are disposed to give a verdict for the prisoner, when a country jury would convict.

The Old Bailey, although extremely inconvenient, is beautifully compact. You can be detained there between the time of your committal and your trial—you can be tried

there, sentenced there, condemned-celled there, and comfortably hanged and buried there, without having to leave the building, except for the purpose of going on to the scaffold. In a short time executions will probably be conducted privately, and then there will be no occasion to go outside the four walls of the building at all—the thing will be done in the paved yard that separates the court-house from the prison. It will then be as though you were tried in the drawing-room, confined in the scullery, and hanged in the back garden.

The court-house contains, besides

ample accommodation for the judges, aldermen, common-councilmen, sheriffs, and under-sheriffs, two large courts, called the Old Court and New Court, and two or three secondary courts, which are only used when the pressure of business is rather heavy. The gravest offences are usually tried in the Old Court on the Wednesday or Thursday after the commencement of the session, on which days one or two of the judges from Westminster sit at the Old Bailey. The arrangement of the Old Court may be taken as a tolerably fair sample of a criminal court. The bench occupies one side of the

THE ALDERMAN ON THE BENCH.

court, and the dock faces it. On the right of the bench are the jury-box and witness-box; on the left are the seats for privileged witnesses and visitors, and also for the reporters and jurymen in waiting. The space bounded by the bench on one side, the dock on another, the jury-box on a third, and the reporters' box on the fourth, is occupied by counsel and attorneys, the larger half being assigned to the counsel. Over the dock is the public gallery, to which admission was formerly obtained by payment of a fee to the warder. It is now free to about thirty of the public at large at one time, who can see nothing of the prisoner except

his scalp, and hear very little of what is going on.

The form in which a criminal trial is conducted is briefly as follows. The case is submitted to the grand jury, and if, on examination of one or more of the witnesses for the prosecution, they find a *prima-facie* case against the prisoner, a 'true bill' is found, and handed to the clerk of arraigns in open court. The prisoner is then called upon to plead; and, in the event of his pleading 'guilty,' the facts of the case are briefly stated by counsel, together with a statement of a previous conviction, if the prisoner is an old offender, and the judge passes sen-

tence. If the prisoner pleads 'not guilty,' the trial proceeds in the following form. The indictment and plea are both read over to the jury by the clerk of arraigns, and they are charged by him to try whether the prisoner is 'guilty' or 'not guilty.' The counsel for the prosecution then opens the case briefly or at length, as its nature may suggest, and then proceeds to call witnesses for the prosecution. At the close of the 'examination in chief' of each witness, the counsel for the defence (or, in the absence of counsel for the defence, the prisoner himself) cross-examines. At the conclusion of the examination and cross-examination of the witnesses for the prosecution, the counsel for the prosecution has the privilege of summing up the arguments that support his case. If witnesses are called for the defence, the defending counsel has, also, a right to sum up; and in that case the counsel for the prosecution has a right of reply. The matter is then left in the hands of the judge, who 'sums up,' placing the facts of the case clearly and impartially before the jury, pointing out discrepancies in the evidence, clearing the case of all superfluous matter, and directing them in all the points of law that arise in the case. The jury then consider their verdict, and, when they are agreed, give it in open court, and the prisoner at the bar is asked whether he has anything to say why the sentence of law shall not be passed upon him. This question is little more than a matter of form, and the judge rarely waits for an answer, but proceeds immediately to pass sentence on the prisoner.

A visitor at the Old Bailey, to whom the courts of Westminster or Guildhall are familiar, will probably be very much struck with the difference between the manner in which the *Nisi Prius* and the criminal barristers are treated by the officials of their respective courts. At Westminster the ushers, who are most unpleasant in their demeanour towards the public at large, are as deferential in their tone to the bar as so many club servants. Like Kathleen's cow, though vicious to

others, they are gentle to them. Indeed, at Westminster the bar are treated by all the officials as gentlemen of position have a right to expect to be. But at the Old Bailey it is otherwise. They appear to be on familiar terms with criers, ushers, thieves' attorneys, clerks, and police serjeants. Attorneys' clerks, of Israelitish aspect, buttonhole them; bumptious criers elbow them right and left, and the policeman on duty at the bar-entrance chaffs them with haughty condescension. Of course there are many gentlemen at the criminal bar whose professional position overawes even this overbearing functionary; but it unfortunately happens that there are a great many needy and unscrupulous practitioners at the Old Bailey, who find it to their advantage to adopt a conciliatory policy towards everybody in office; for it is an unfortunate fact that almost everybody in office has it in his power, directly or indirectly, to do an Old Bailey barrister a good turn. 'Dockers,' or briefs handed directly from the prisoner in the dock to counsel, without the expensive intervention of an attorney, are distributed pretty well at the discretion of the warder in the dock, or of the gaoler to whose custody the prisoner has been entrusted since his committal; and there are a few needy barristers who are not ashamed to allow their clerks to tout among prisoners' friends for briefs at half fees. It is only fair to state that the counsel who resort to these ungentlemanly dodges form but a small proportion of the barristers who practise at the Old Bailey; but still they are sufficiently numerous to affect most seriously the tone that is adopted by Old Bailey officials towards the bar as a body.

The conventional Old Bailey barrister, however, is a type that is gradually dying out. The rising men at the criminal bar are certainly far from being all that could be desired; but their tone in cross-examination is more gentlemanly than that commonly in vogue among Old Bailey barristers of twenty years since. There are a few among them who occasionally attempt to bully, not

only the witnesses, but even the judge and jury; but they always get the worst of it. As a rule, cross-examinations are conducted more fairly than they were, and a determination to convict at any price is rarer on the part of a prosecuting counsel than of yore. If some means could be adopted to clear the court of the touting counsel, or, at all events, to render their discreditable tactics inoperative, a great change for the better would be

effected in the tone adopted towards the bar by the officials about the court. As it is, it is almost impossible for a young counsel to retain his self-respect in the face of the annoying familiarities of the underlings with whom he is brought into contact. On the occasion of our last visit to the Old Bailey, during the trial of Jeffrey for the murder of his son, we happened to witness a dispute between an insolent policeman, stationed at the bar entrance, and a

THE CRIES.

young barrister in robes, who was evidently not an *habitué* of that court. The barrister had a friend with him, and he wanted to get a place for his friend, either in the bar seats, or in the seats set aside for the friends of the bench and bar. The policeman in question placed his arm across the door, and absolutely refused to allow either the barrister or his friend to enter, on the ground that the court was quite full. The barrister sent his card to the under-sheriff, who immediately gave directions that both were to be admitted to the bar-seats, which were occupied by about a fourth of the number which they would conveniently accommodate, about half of the people occupying them being

friends of counsel who, we suppose, were on more intimate terms with the discourteous functionary than was the barrister in question. On another occasion it came to our knowledge that a barrister, who did not habitually practise at the Old Bailey, was refused admission at the bar entrance to the court-house by the police-sergeant stationed there. He showed his card, but without avail, and eventually he expressed his intention of forcing his way past the policeman, and told that official that if he stopped him he would do so at his peril. The policeman allowed him to pass, but actually told another constable to follow him to the robing-room, to see whether he had any right there or not. The bar-

rister, naturally annoyed at being thus conveyed in custody through the building, complained to one of the under-sheriffs for the time being, but without obtaining the slightest redress. Of course this system of impertinence has the effect of confining Old Bailey practice to a thick-skinned few; but it does not tend to elevate the tone of the bar (of which the Old Bailey barrister is unfortunately generally taken as a type); and those who are jealous for the honour of the profession should take steps to do away with it.

To a stranger, a criminal trial is always an interesting sight. If the prisoner happen to be charged with a crime of magnitude, he has become quite a public character by the time he enters the dock to take his trial; and it is always interesting to see how far a public character corresponds with the ideal which we have formed of him. Then his demeanour in the dock, influenced, as it often is, by the fluctuating character of the evidence for and against him, possesses a grim interest for the unaccustomed spectator. He is wit-

THE OLD BAILEY BARRISTER.

nessing a real sensation drama, and as the case draws to a close, if the evidence has been very conflicting, he feels an interest in the issue akin to that with which a sporting man would take in the running of a great race. Then the deliberations of the jury on their verdict, the sharp, anxious look which the prisoner casts ever and anon towards them, the deep breath that he draws as the jury resume their places, the trembling anxiety, or, more affecting still, the preternaturally compressed lips and contracted brow, with which he awaits the publication of their verdict, and his great,

deep sigh of relief when he knows the worst, must possess a painful interest for all but those whom familiarity with such scenes has hardened. Then comes the sentence, followed, perhaps, by a woman's shriek from the gallery, and all is over, as far as the spectator is concerned. The next case is called on, and new facts and new faces soon obliterate any painful effect which the trial may have had upon his mind.

Probably the first impression on the mind of a man who visits the Old Bailey for the first time is that he never saw so many ugly people collected in any one place before.

The judges are not handsome men, as a rule, the aldermen on the bench never are; barristers, especially Old Bailey barristers, are the ugliest of professional men, excepting always solicitors; the jury have a bull-headed look about them that suggests that they have been designedly selected from the most stupid of their class; the reporters are usually dirty, and of evil savour; the under-strappers have a bloated, overfed, Bumble-like look about them, which is always a particularly annoying thing to a sensitive mind; and the prisoner, of course, looks (whether

guilty or innocent) the most ruffianly of mankind, for he stands in the dock. We remember seeing a man tried for a burglary some time since, and we came to the conclusion that he had the most villainous face with which a man could be cursed. The case against him rested on the testimony of a nice-looking and ingenuous lad as ever stepped into a witness-box. But, unfortunately for the ingenuous lad, a clear *alibi* was established, the prisoner was immediately acquitted, and the nice boy, his accuser, was trotted into the dock on a charge of perjury.

THE OLD BAILIET ATTORNEY.

The principal witness against him was the former prisoner, and we were perfectly astounded at the false estimate we had formed of their respective physiognomies. The former prisoner's face was, we found, homely enough; but it absolutely beamed with honest enthusiasm in the cause of justice, while the nice lad's countenance turned out to be the very type of sly, insidious rascality. It is astonishing how the atmosphere of the dock inverts the countenance of any one who may happen to be in it. And this leads us to the consideration how surpassingly beautiful must that ballet-girl

have been, who, even in the dock, exercised so extraordinary a fascination over a learned deputy-judge at the Middlesex sessions the other day. We remember once to have heard a well-known counsel, who was defending a singular ill-favoured prisoner, say to the jury, 'Gentlemen, you must not allow yourselves to be carried away by any effect which the prisoner's appearance may have upon you. Remember, he is in the dock; and I will undertake to say, that if my lord were to be taken from the bench upon which he is sitting, and placed where the prisoner is now standing, you, who are

unaccustomed to criminal trials, would find, even in his lordship's face, indications of crime which you would look for in vain in any other situation!' In fairness we withhold the learned judge's name.

Perhaps the most ill-favoured among this ill-favoured gathering are to be found among the thieves' attorneys. There are some Old Bailey attorneys who are respectable men, and it often happens that a highly-respectable solicitor has occasion to pay an exceptional visit to this establishment, just as queen's counsel of standing at Nisi Prius are often employed in cases of grave importance; but these solicitors of standing are the exception, and the dirty, cunning-looking, hook-nosed, unsavoury little Jews, with thick gold rings on their stubby fingers, and

crisp black hair curling down their backs, the rule. They are the embodiment of meat, drink, washing, and professional reputation to the needy barristers whom they employ, and as such, their intimacy is, of course, much courted and in great request. Of course many Old Bailey barristers are utterly independent of this ill-favoured race; but there are, unfortunately, too many men to be found whose only road to professional success lies in the good-will of these gentry. There are, among the thieves' lawyers, men of acute intelligence and honourable repute, and who do their work extremely well; but the majority of them are sneaking, underhand, grovelling practitioners, who are utterly unrecognized by men of good standing.

CHARLIE CAREW.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'DENIS DONNE,' 'ON GUARD,' 'WALTER GORING,' ETC.

CHAPTER III.

IN HONOUR OF CHARLIE.

THERE was not much of an echo about the Fox-cover; but what there was suffered to prolong the last notes of Jack Markham's voice without interruption. When it had quite died away, Di, with a little difficulty and a little consciousness, spoke—

'Thanks, Mr. Markham; how well your voice filled this space; didn't it, Charlie?'

'Wonderfully,' Mr. Carew replied, with the carelessness that is more offensive when united to warm words than to cool ones.

'Can you sing, Charlie?' the younger sister asked, abruptly. And he shrugged his shoulders, and said, 'Oh, no,' as if singing and he might never be named together on any terms.

'But you half promised,' Di said, coaxingly; 'do try, Charlie.' The pleader was so lovely and so loving, that Mr. Carew could not be very much disgusted with the impracticability of the female mind, which could lead a girl to ask a man who couldn't 'to try to sing,' in these days of vocal perfection.

'Why mar such perfect harmony as there is in this scene and atmosphere by making a row?' he whispered to Miss Prescott. 'Let those fellows go on drinking sherry and destroying sound, and you two girls come for a stroll with me.'

'Very well,' Di acquiesced. She would have liked it better had he suggested that she should accompany him in the stroll without her sister. But, it was kind to Nellie, at any rate, to include her in the plan; so Di rose in response, blithely making the best of it.

'Ah, this is good!' Mr. Carew exclaimed, as with his two companions he got out of earshot of the two Prescotts and Jack Markham. 'I declare to you, Di, it's the first mo-

ment I have breathed freely to-day.'

'Is it? I am sorry you should have had a sense of suffocation,' Nelly replied for her sister.

He laughed good-temperedly. He knew the girl was quietly laughing at him, and thinking him 'fine;' but this was a charge that he had not the smallest objection to being made against him.

'It was just that, Nellie, "a sense of suffocation," as you beautifully express it. What else could I have had, I ask you, while dragging through turnips, listening to jokes of the land, which those fellows made to each other, or while Mr. Jack Markham mildly reproached Di in song about the "other day?"'

'Poor Jack!' Di muttered, softly.

'Poor Jack!' Nellie struck in, vigorously. 'Dear Jack, I say. I wish I could console him, Mr. Charlie Carew; he's worth any number of you that could be given.'

'Happily for me, Di didn't think so.'

'No; Di's a goose—no rule for me,' the girl replied, laughing. 'Now, Di, don't look as if you thought me a rare combination of all the most displeasing qualities. I only meant to show my very high appreciation of Jack by comparing him to Charlie; and if I had not grossly exaggerated in my comparison, you'd have said it was not meet they should be so much as named together. Now, gallant so gay, sit down and tell me whether you have anything better worth looking at than this in the Strand.'

'No, indeed,' he said, heartily, as he seated himself: and no indeed was the very truth.

Small as the space they had traversed from the spot where they had had luncheon was in reality, it was very far in seeming; for the face of the land—or rather its

expression—was utterly changed. They had left the knoll called the Fox-cover, and the wide slope of turnip-field behind them to the right, and had turned a corner into a wooded meadow, through which a river ran, between banks that were trimmed with alder and aspen trees. There was a twin-meadow opposite to them, over the stream, whose bright damp green threw into high relief several groups of dark-red Devons and compactly-built black Scots. Behind these, a background of wood rose in a gentle slope—a wood with the memory of summer's bright days still about it in emerald tints, but with still more of autumn's rich perfection—of tawny browns, and those even ruddier hues—those fuller splendours that nature lavishes when the year is dying royally in crimson and gold.

It was a very fair scene; and Charlie Carew felt all the fairness of it more fully, perhaps, than either of his companions. To them it lacked that charm of freshness—of dissimilitude to the scenes through which his daily path lay—which it had for him. The quiet, clear river, creeping along between its luxuriant banks, slowly, as though it were loath to leave what was so fair, even for what might be fairer; the gentle breathing of the breeze through the aspen boughs; the light shiver it made over the water; the reflections in the latter of sky and foliage, each idealized in some mysterious way; the hush that was over all the world, as it seemed; that tone of crispness which, however bright the sun, a September day in England never lacks; the mingling of beauty and purity, of peace and elasticity,—made place and hour alike, for Charlie Carew, things never to be forgotten.

'By Jove! a fellow might do something with his life here, if he only had the time,' he exclaimed, after a long pause, during which Di had been hoping that he wasn't bored, and Nellie that he was, in order that she might chaff him out of the frame of mind at the first fitting opportunity. 'It seems to me that it would be just the place where you would have plenty of

time to do what you willed with your life. No theatres, and no balls, and no clubs, and no——'

'Croquet-parties,' Di interrupted.

'No croquet-parties! Oh, indeed! I fancied you had told me you played a good deal about here,' Mr. Carew said, carelessly.

'So we do; I ought to have said, no Ladbroke Square, or Alice Leslie.'

'Which speech would have made me regret her, if nothing else would,' he replied, coldly. And then Nellie saw that all was not quite well with the lovers, and judged it better to leave them, saying she 'would go back and fetch up those other lazy boys, if they did not mean to shoot any more.'

Like every woman who gives vent to a small burst of jealousy, Di Prescott had put herself into the wrong place. It was small, and she knew it to be small; and, harder still, she knew that he considered it small. 'Oh, dear, dear!' she thought, 'why did I ever recall that horrid girl, with her pretty feet and her graceful ways, to his mind?' Then she remembered how admirably the Leslies always catered for his entertainment; how well they got up little dinners for him; how particular they were not to have the inevitable bores that are in every circle on the evenings when he was coming; how careful about his coffee, and considerate about the quality of the strains that were sung in his ears in their drawing-room. She remembered all these things, having had a good look behind the scenes during her six weeks' sojourn with them; and she also remembered the dinner-party that was to come off that evening at her mother's house, and trembled for its effect on him.

'Dear Charlie!' she said, softly, developing a sudden humility in her agitation and doubt, that was most agreeable to Mr. Carew; 'dear Charlie! how good you are to find things smoother than they really are down here, for my sake: I know what a change it must be for you.'

'This part of it is jolly enough,' he replied, affectionately taking her hand and placing it on his arm. 'I should like nothing better than for this sort of business to last, Di.'

'While the weather stayed fine,' she laughed; 'and if you had a very capital, well-appointed house to go home to when it gets near dinner-time.'

'All that goes without saying,' he replied; 'the well-appointed house must be mine, wherever I am; and whenever I settle, poverty, discomfort, and I wouldn't long be occupants of the same house.'

'Poverty is all relative,' Di was beginning, when he interrupted her to say—

'My dear girl, so are most things.' Then he laughed, and added that, though it might be true that man wanted but little here below, nor wanted that little long, still, for his part, he would like to have it remarkably good. And then poor Di had a qualm of fear as to the possibility of his being a little worldly, superadded to some others.

After a time—and the time passed very quickly in that clear, bright, vigorous air, on that sweet spot where only the water reflected,—it was borne in upon Di's mind that they had better look for the pony-carriage and go home to dress for dinner.

'We are to dine at half-past six instead of six, to-day, Charlie,' she said at last, rising up; 'we must go back to the Fox-cover, because of Pet and Nellie.'

'I feel very much more inclined to stay here,' Charlie replied, languidly, stretching himself at greater length upon the grass; 'it's an awful nuisance to get up and go in from this to the certainty of being bored.'

'Really I hardly know what to say or what to leave unsaid,' the girl answered, rather sadly; 'you place me in a peculiarly painful position; if you have no feeling against doing this yourself, I can scarcely hope to influence you.'

He jumped up at once. 'You are a darling,' he exclaimed, his face flushing as he spoke. 'I half feared you would pout and try to say sharp things, and by Jove I couldn't have answered for myself if you had; but nothing sweeter ever exorcised a devil out of a man than that look of yours just now. But,

darling, this is your time—to please you I'll lay myself out to amuse your mother's guests, tell them anecdotes even.'

She laughed. 'I won't ask such a sacrifice, only don't make fun, and don't be too fine, as Nellie calls it: and oh, Charlie, if you and my brothers could like each other a little? just for my sake.'

'For your sake who would not promise even harder things? In return, don't let that fellow sing his sentimental twaddle, and stumble over melodious allusions to what may or may not be the rallying points of both your memories concerning the "other day."'

'Now, Charlie,' she released her hand from his arm as they walked, and carried herself more erectly and firmly at once,—'now Charlie, understand, all that you tell me to do that's right I'll do; but I will not cut an old friend for nothing.'

'I don't ask you to cut him.'

'I don't mean to "cut," in your sense of the word; I mean that I can't cut one of the kindest hearts in the world; not listen to him whenever he sings and whenever he speaks; can't you trust me to do it, Charlie?'

'Trust you; I should have rather a poor opinion of myself if I couldn't trust you with him, or a dozen like him.'

'I don't believe that there are a dozen to be found like him,' she replied, injudiciously; 'he may not be polished or clever, particularly clever that is, but he is true and generous in every way; generous in act and generous in thought.'

'I give him up to you with all his merits, Di; don't expect me to admire him, that's all; he's not in my line; where is your sister?'

'Gone home with the boys, I suppose,' Di replied, quietly. She was feeling very much subdued, too much so for the beauty of the dying day to make any appeal to her taste. 'I shall really be glad to get into the gig and have a rest,' she said wearily, as they came up to where Pet was tethered.

It was a quarter past six when they reached home; some of their guests had already arrived, and

Mrs. Prescott was wafting anxiously about the house, making fervent inquiries of people who were not at all in a position to give her reliable information as to the whereabouts of Mr. Carew and her eldest daughter. Nellie was dressed, quite ready for and equal to the task of entertaining the assembled guests as well as they would be entertained before dinner. But Nellie was not the pride of her heart—her recently-engaged daughter.

‘Where can Di be?’ Mrs. Prescott asked for the fiftieth time, with a sort of ever-fresh interrogatory air of Nellie; and Nellie made precisely the same answer she had given an hour before on first entering the house.

‘Well, mamma, I left her up in the old meadow with Charlie; where she may be now it is impossible to say,’

At length poor Mrs. Prescott got plaintive. ‘Di should not be so thoughtless,’ she murmured to her two sons and Nellie in succession; ‘she can dress quickly, but there’s Mr. Carew, with all those studs, and Tom and Flora have been here an hour.’

‘Their own fault for coming so early,’ Nellie rejoined lightly; ‘however, here they come, whipping up Pet as if it was all his fault, poor little fellow; so ease your mind, mother.’

But Mrs. Prescott’s mind would not submit to being eased until she had been out into the hall to welcome and offer them such aids to speedy dressing as suggested themselves to her mind.

‘Now look here, Mr. Carew,’ the kind old lady began, eagerly, ‘you haven’t much time to spare, cook being punctual to a fault, as I sometimes say; still a glass of sherry with an egg beaten up you know wouldn’t take a minute.’

‘My dear madam, before dinner, no, thank you.’

‘What, not after your hard day’s walking—now do, or a nice cup of coffee; it’s made all ready for the evening.’

Charlie Carew groaned in spirit. ‘Precious stuff it will be when a fellow has to take it,’ he thought;

but he only said aloud, ‘No, thanks; but if I could have some bitters I should——’

‘I’ve the very thing for you,’ the mistress of the mansion said, energetically, ‘it shall be sent up to your room directly.’ And then Mr. Charlie Carew did manage to get himself away to dress.

It did come to him directly, and then he was ungrateful enough to find it unfit to drink. When he had signified his desire for ‘bitters,’ he had no idea that he would be offered a decoction of Seville orange-peel in sweet sherry as a substitute, and he did not approve of it. He tasted it and put it down with an unmistakeable expression of face—an expression that was unmistakeable even to the rather obtuse mind of the more than rather ancient handmaiden who had brought him the draught. When he was left alone he went on dressing and grumbling to himself, and so did not make much way with his toilet, and had to be summoned finally, which put him further out of temper, and was altogether in an ill frame of mind when he did go down to the dinner that was given in his honour.

Why would these people give festivities for him? He asked himself the question with a groan almost, when he was led to the slaughter by Miss Price, to whom he was handed over as soon as he entered the drawing-room. ‘Charlie, I want to introduce you to my particular friend, Miss Price,’ Di whispered to him; and he bowed a graceful assent to the request, and wished finally that he had been born in that advanced period when a man’s engaging himself to a girl shall not mean that he engages himself to all her kith and kin.

It need scarcely be said that he did not like Miss Price. She was a fine, fair girl, with a large expanse of white neck and shoulder, unbecomingly outlined by a badly-cut low muslin dress. She was a volatile young lady, too—a girl who was said to have ‘such spirits’ by her friends, and who was denominated a ‘regular brick’ by her brother, whose house she kept very much

to their mutual satisfaction. She was, in fact, rather loud and rather fast, and she was indisputably not pretty nor well bred enough to be either with impunity.

On the present occasion she had come over to dine at the Prescotts' in a way of which Mr. Carew, the rather conventional, could not at all approve. 'Shall we have a good moon to-night, Mr. Carew?' she asked, as soon as they were seated at the table; and when he rather languidly replied he 'didn't know, the moon never interested him in England,' she went on to say—

'Ah! but it does me, you see; for in the first place I have never been out of England, and in the second place I am going home tandem to-night.'

'Going home, I beg your pardon, *how*?'

'Tandem,' she replied, laughing. 'Tom wanted to try a new leader; he's always impatient, so he said he would drive me over or not come himself at all. I preferred his company, and risked a spill.'

Charlie Carew sipped his wine; Di's particular friend rather took his breath away.

'What do you think of Jack Markham?' the young lady went on; 'he's our great card about here, you must know.'

'Seems a very nice fellow,' Charlie replied, loftily.

'Yes, he is, and isn't he handsome, Mr. Carew? I never saw such eyes in my life. Then he does ride so. Oh! I can tell you Di has been very much envied and very much wondered at.'

'Indeed,' he said, stiffly.

'Yes, indeed. Now, just look at him; doesn't he look well, talking to Nellie? I do hope he'll take a fancy to Nellie as he can't have Di,' Miss Price went on, fervently, in touching unconsciousness of the keen desire Charlie had to strangle her.

'I see nothing but a blue-eyed booby,' he said, rather coldly. 'You must forgive me for not giving the local hero a lofty place in my Pantheon at once, Miss Price; but I have had a great deal of him to-day, and I am rather tired.'

'What did he do to tire you?' Miss Price asked, bluntly.

'He did a great deal, not to tire me, of course; looking back upon the day it seems to be all Mr. Jack Markham's shooting and singing; he did both delightfully, of course: still I am tired.'

'What did he sing?' the girl asked, eagerly.

'Something about the "other day," nothing very thrilling or remarkable, and with some uncommonly difficult words to enunciate at the end of each verse.'

'Ah, I know, "warp and woof;" they are hard to sing, but it's a pretty thing. Jack wrote and composed it himself. I remember the day he did it, too.'

'Pray favour me with the reminiscence,' Charlie asked, politely.

'Well, there is no harm in my mentioning it, because if Di hasn't told you she will tell you, or I wouldn't peach. You know he liked Di very much, and once they seemed to be very good friends, oh! for a long time; then, all of a sudden, Di altered. I suppose it was when she found he wanted to be more than an old friend, you know. And just after she *had* altered I was here with her one day, and we took them out their luncheon (as Di and Nellie did you to-day), and we got singing after it, and he made up those lines, and I do say they're clever.'

Meanwhile an equally interesting conversation was being carried on between Di and Jack Markham. It had fallen to that gentleman's lot to take Miss Prescott in to dinner, and in his honest, jolly way, he was very happy in his lot, and very desirous of proving to himself whether Di had satisfaction in it also, or whether she simply looked upon it as an infliction, temporary as it was.

'It was like old times to see you in the field to-day,' he said presently.

'Yes, quite, wasn't it?' she replied, without much thought. She was occupied in admiring Charlie's style, and Charlie's graceful, non-chalant manner of eating a dinner that had been subject of solemn

consideration with her mother for some days.

'And yet not quite like old times, was it?' Jack went on, with his face flushing a little, and his voice shaking: 'it was queer to me at first to hear him speaking to you as Di, and to think he is going to take you away from us all. When is it to be?'

'I really can hardly say, Jack,' the girl replied, nervously.

'Will you promise to tell me yourself when it is to be? I would rather hear it from you than from any one else. I'd rather you should see what I shan't be able to help showing than any one else.'

'Jack!' she murmured, deprecatingly, almost piteously.

'Yes, you know it will be a sharp blow for me,' he continued; 'but you would not have dealt it if you could have helped it, I know that; and it isn't so bad as it would have been if he were not a good fellow: but he is a good fellow, I'm sure of that.'

'A good fellow!' The praise was so very mediocre when applied to such perfection. Di had to summon up all her long-suffering with regard to Jack Markham before she could answer calmly—

'Indeed he is, Jack, everything that every one can desire. The Leslies know him well, and they thought no one on earth like him; that is to say,' she added with a laugh, 'they thought so until he was engaged to me; now they think less of him.'

'I remember Miss Leslie staying with you once, a pretty little girl,' Jack replied.

'She's a pretty big girl now, tall, with a wonderfully good figure. You should hear'—she paused, and then made a little effort of generosity, and added, 'you should hear Mr. Carew talk about her feet when she's playing croquet.'

'Is she coming to see you at all this year?'

'She has promised to be one of my bridesmaids,' Di answered. 'Now, Jack, take my advice, and see a good deal of her while she is here: if you do you won't be able to help liking her, and then she won't be able to help liking you.'

'That did not follow in another case,' he said, meaningly; and she laughed and shook her head, and said—

'You had been like a dear brother to me so long that I'm not to be cited. Alice has ten times my sense.'

'How shall you like living in London?' Jack asked, irrelevantly.

'Oh! very much, I fancy—anywhere with Charlie,' Di answered, ruthlessly.

'You'll find it a great change.'

'Of course I shall. You're like mamma; she tells me constantly that I shall not have fresh eggs and unlimited supplies of cream and home-made bread; as if I lived on those things and never ate anything else. And another grievous deprivation she has in store for me. I shall have no lavender out of my own garden to dry and put in my drawers. It never occurs to her that I may buy some ready cut in Covent Garden, or that I mayn't, as I hate it.'

He smiled. 'You'll miss other things more than eggs and lavender, Di: you'll miss your friends.'

'I shall see them always,' the girl answered, hurriedly. 'London is not Central Africa.'

'Not always, or often even, Di, unless I'm very much mistaken. No, we must make up our minds to lose you when you marry.'

'That's simply absurd,' she replied. 'I shall always be glad to see my friends; it's unkind of you to throw a doubt on the subject.'

But though she said this firmly, she did not feel by any means sure that Charlie Carew would be glad to see her friends; and it did occur to her that unless he displayed some such feeling, her friends would very seldom give him an opportunity of seeing them.

Mr. Carew was the first to rejoin the ladies. He had not exactly held aloof from the other men, but he had not mixed well with them. He knew by intuition that they were not free of his topics, and he scorned theirs, or rather scorned their manner of dealing with them. Jack Markham was the most unendurable to the young official, for he (Jack)

not only had opinions about many things, but he gave them out when it seemed good to him to do so, and this Charlie could hardly tolerate in a man who had barely been beyond the border of his own county.

'Your Mr. Jack Markham has

been good enough to treat us to an essay on art, art as seen at the Royal Academy,' Charlie said, sauntering up to Di, and she replied—

'Has he? I'll get him to show you his pictures some day, if you're good.'

(*To be continued.*)

'HEAVY BAGGAGE;'

or, 'The Mabe of the Regiment.'

'IT must be a mistake, my dear Horace. We have to wait for the arrival of the "Shrew" from the West Indies before we can be moved. Don't you see, the same ship that brings over that regiment will take ours to its destination. Now, I'll bet you we don't move before the 15th of the month.'

'Well, my dear old boy, all I can say is, that Turner wrote to Huntley and said that Weatherby, who is in the quartermaster-general's office, you know, told him we were to sail immediately, and he ought to know.'

'I can't believe it, Lambert. Did you see the letter? for that fellow is always picking up some new "shave;" and I shouldn't be surprised if he tells us next we are ordered to Austria or Denmark.'

'We shall go a long way, lads, however, before we find a jollier quarter than this. Where can you get so much leave, and where can you be so near London? I should like to put in the rest of my service here.'

'Oh! that's all very jolly for you, Fox; you've got lots of tin, and can enjoy yourself; but for us poor wretched subalterns there is nothing but guards, parades, and orderly duty. It's a beastly hole to my thinking, and I wish we were out of it.'

'You needn't trouble yourself, you'll go when you least expect it; so if you take my advice you'll pack up all your kit and be ready at a moment's notice.'

'Jones, I'll bet you *five* shillings we're off before a week is over.'

'Done, with you, my noble Ens.!'

'Ha! ha! Mr. President, half a dozen of "fiz" at once. That bet was made before the cloth was removed, and you must learn the rules of the service.'

'Oh! well, that is deuced sharp; but never mind, order it in; we mayn't be all together again for some time.'

Such was a portion of a conversation overheard at a mess table of a certain gallant regiment not very long ago. Of course, while the champagne (that was forfeited by the thoughtless ensign for accepting a bet at the dinner-table) flowed, the number of opinions as to the date the regiment was to leave the station, the destination to which it was assigned, and the means by which the transport was to be effected, increased to such an alarming extent, that anything like a true appreciation of the real position of matters was an impossibility.

They were not, however, to be kept much longer in doubt. The following morning was but half gone when a mounted soldier galloped through the lines of huts that formed the camp, and soon became the object of wonder to all. 'He's got the order, and wants the commanding officer's quarters, I'll bet,' shouted a host of voices. 'Come on and let's see what it is.' Away some started in hot pursuit, and were rewarded for their exertion by being the first to hear that 'the heavy baggage was to be at Portsmouth by daylight on Monday morning, and that the regiment would embark on the following day.' Now

for the mixture of joy and woe; rejoicing at leaving field days, guards, cocked hats, and full-dress tunics; regret at parting with old faces, jolly companions, and well-known friends; at the prospect of a dismantled room, packed baggage, and its accompanying inconveniences; and, perhaps more than all, at the thought of going farther from that city of life and bustle, the very centre of amusement and gaiety, and Paradise of the man of the world.

No class of men are better able to judge of the advantages of places than those who have had extensive experience, and when we see London almost universally acknowledged by military men as the 'prime spot' in England, there must be good reason for such extensive partiality.

How quickly news spreads in a regiment. Everybody seems to consider it his duty to tell his neighbour; and before many minutes have elapsed every man, woman, and child know as much, if not more, than the commanding officer himself. There are very few secrets in this large family; if anything, imagination adds to the reality, and distorted and exaggerated stories are circulated and believed.

What a bustle such an order as that just received produces! Although it was known for some weeks that a move was undoubtedly to be made, you would imagine that this was the first intimation. Such a hubbub, confusion, fuss, and turmoil. Every one going contrary ways—boxes, bedding, furniture, fittings, upside down. 'The heavy baggage must be ready in twelve hours,' says the regimental order-book. From early dawn the open spaces in front of the barrack huts, and the ground surrounding the officers' and married quarters, are sprinkled with various articles. Rope is at a premium, and any one possessing a hammer or a paper of nails is regarded with profound feelings of respect, and is addressed in tones of endearment by those less fortunate in carpentry arrangements. What do they mean by 'heavy baggage?' is a question that is asked and yet never satisfactorily

answered. Individuals have formed independent ideas on this point, and while Major Flood despatches chests of drawers, arm-chairs, boxes of pictures, furniture and crockery, Lieutenant Stride includes in his, gun-cases, hat-boxes, walking-sticks, and archery equipment. The only rational view that can be taken of that truly puzzling term 'heavy baggage' is, to my mind, all that you can do without for any number of days and nights. Do not, reader, on any consideration be persuaded that your bedding and your tub, looking-glass, or toothbrush, come under this sweeping classification. Heed not the fearful accounts of the disciplinarian, who horrifies the youngsters by telling them that the 'military train will only take 80 lbs. of personal property;' and further piles on the agony by insinuating that 'perhaps the captain of the vessel may refuse to take so much on board, and then of course yours will be left behind.' These are mere phantoms and hobgoblins. A paternal and benevolent government cannot desire her servants to sleep on the ground, and to suffer such miseries and annoyances; and, as far as my experience goes, the more you study your own interest the better you are thought to be. But say you, 'that's all moonshine; I've had to do without my bed for nights together.' All I would ask is, Wasn't that your own fault? Were you not too anxious about that order? It must come to the same thing if you run the risk of getting your bed with you. Supposing a mishap to arise from either the crusty nature of your colonel, quartermaster, or captain of the troopship, it is only the inconvenience a bit later, and the chances are so much in your favour that it is worth the hazard. Why, if you had seen the 'omnium gatherum' that represented the 'light baggage' of our regiment the morning we were to leave, you would have been struck dumb with astonishment. Bedding and bedsteads, trunks and shako cases, canary birds and cats, brooms and buckets, billiard cues and clubs, were mixed together in perfect confusion. All gradually melted away,

however, and by eleven o'clock in the morning had been safely stowed away in the vans of the railway company.

The usual good feeling that is exhibited by one regiment towards another was not wanting on this occasion, and two bands of different corps preceded us as we marched to the station. The sick, with the women and children, had been sent on, and as far as possible had been made comfortable. If there is any class of creature that is constant in their habits it is the regimental married woman. It matters but little whether she be the wife of the sergeant-major or the helpmate of an ordinary private, she cannot be satisfied, she must not feel contented. There is never enough room; it is always 'a shame to serve a poor creature so;' or else 'shure you can't call yerself a mon, if yer say that; you may get married some day, and then you'll see!' What with boxes, babies, bundles, and bottles, only half the number of occupants can be expected to get into each carriage.

The officer of the quartermaster-general's department, who arrives just as all the work is over, and yet thinks it his duty to have a little fuss on his own account, shouts out, 'Who is in charge of these women and children? this will never do.' No response points out the commandant of this unruly detachment. Who *can command* such a regiment I should like to know? The poor overworked station-master, who has been struggling with the last group of obstinates for some time, replies to the queries of the official, 'It's no use, sir, they can't be managed; three children, two women, a bird-cage, and the rest bundles, is what they call a carriage full. They'd take the whole train, they would, if I'd let em.' Patience, however, overcomes even a soldier's wife, and we settle down, forgetting our inconveniences, and ready for the start at the first signal.

The love of change and desire for novelty are so deeply implanted in the human breast, that, although it may be known that the new station to which we are going is far from

agreeable, and loses immensely in comparison with the old one, yet our spirits rise, and anticipation often excites and arouses the most morose amongst us. This may partly account for the noise and laughter that proceeds from that first-class carriage—for the singing and vociferous chorus that startles the neighbourhood of the various stations as the train flits by—for the occasional protrusion of a red-coated object, which seems bent on throwing something—doubtless orange-peel—into the open window of the next compartment, or the scene of riot and yet harmless fun that consists in fighting with newspapers rolled up into sticks, or cannonading balls of a similarly innocuous character. Differences are forgotten on such occasions, and grievances that perhaps have existed for some time are remedied, and friendships recemented.

It is a peculiar sensation that one feels when a railway journey is completed, and a town is reached that is dear to you from old associations. The regiment had been quartered at the station for some months, and most of us as we neared the spot could discern objects of interest and familiar places. 'There are the old barracks, my boy; don't I wish we were to remain there,' says one young fellow who doubtless first tasted military life when the regiment occupied the buildings referred to. 'Why! they've altered the front of the Star and Garter,' ejaculates an older officer, who had thoroughly acquainted himself with the appearance of the former hotel. 'Well,' says his companion, 'we shall see a lot of people we know as we go through the town; won't it be jolly.' 'Yes, that it will,' breaks in the extravagant ensign, 'especially if Jones the tailor knows I am passing through to a place where he can't reach me.'

Jones didn't catch our merry but careless friend, nor did we see the crowd of well-known faces; for the extension of the railway through the town into the dockyard, enabled our train to shunt until we almost came up alongside the vessel that was to convey us to our destination.

And now again the bustle com-

mences. Bundles, cages, boxes, and the entire paraphernalia have to be readjusted and stowed away. The ship is a man-of-war, one of her Majesty's finest frigates, and has not been used to such a confused concourse of people. But she is commanded by one of the kindest and best of naval officers, who although he is very cross at having this transport duty thrust upon him, is determined to do the best he can, and to get over the work as pleasantly and as speedily as possible. 'You can do what you like, but pray don't touch the guns,' was the first remark he made—and that really seemed to be all the restriction he meant to impose upon us—for the deck of the fine vessel was soon covered with a mass of red coats and baggage; the 'between decks' was inhabited by the sick, the women and children, and the very 'sanctum sanctorum,' the quarter-deck, was made into a parade-ground for the officers, with here and there a lady.

'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good,' and so thought the young midshipmen and cadets on board H.M.S. 'Terrific,' who gave up their hammocks, and turned out of their usual sleeping quarters to make room for the women and children.

How they seemed to enjoy the novelty of the scene, the noise, cries of babies, and crowded state of all the available space both above and below. When our band struck up, and they weighed anchor, then indeed all their faces were bright and cheerful, contrasting strangely with the anxious appearance of those whose anticipations of rolling and pitching, almost aroused feelings of sea-sickness before the paddles had revolved a dozen times. But it was a beautiful afternoon, and the ripples were hardly visible on the sea as we passed Spithead, and anchored again for a short time to take on board a fresh supply of powder and other necessary warlike freight. The setting sun heightened the beauty of the scene, and as the foam in the vessel's wake glittered and sparkled in golden form, the full moon rose, and gradually assuming the supremacy, transferred a silvery glow over the landscape and surface

of the water. The effect was a perfect dissolving view; and no one could help indulging in happy and contented musings, even under all the disagreeables and disadvantages of a troop-ship. The call to dinner soon roused us from our self-satisfied repose, and appetites of no ordinary calibre astonished the well-furnished table in the ward-room.

Thorough hospitality and a most attentive steward, however, speedily put us in an equally tranquil state, and we were indeed at peace with ourselves. It will hardly be believed I can imagine, but songs, jokes, and merriment hastened on the evening, whilst cigars and short pipes held their sway, where they are generally under such strict control, in a free and unfettered manner. Night wore on, and increased in brightness and magnificent effect the sea and surrounding objects; groups of fellows, with here and there a young midshipman in wonder at their tales of adventure and travel, were found in close conversation, whilst sundry movements under cloaks and railway rugs apparently deposited on the top of the baggage, undeniably proved that either the fresh air or the substantial meal had produced a soporific effect on my fellow-travellers. At last stillness reigned, and no sound was audible but the cry of the watch, the ripple of the water, and an occasional grunt from some uncomfortable mortal who perchance slipped off a portion of the baggage, got his foot entangled in a stray rope, or, in the most childish manner, dreamt that he was comfortably nestled in an eider-down pillow, and only found how lamentably he was deceived when a restless brother trod on his face or kicked him lustily, and apologizingly exclaimed, 'Oh! dear! I thought you were baggage.' We had not all, however, gone to sleep. One bit of mischief was still before us, and that was this. One of the officers, whose activity had hitherto been a matter of speculation, volunteered before embarkation to sleep in a hammock. A small party bent on any fun or amusement were determined to find if our friend really kept his word, and so started on a voyage of discovery.

Within a screened portion of the lower deck we came upon our fellow traveller quietly asleep in the identical apparatus that presents such insurmountable difficulties to landsmen generally, and for some time we scanned him with wonder and admiration. One of our company, more waggish than the rest, discovered that the length of the hammock and our friend's height did not correspond, the consequence being that two feet projected in a most tempting manner. Not a moment's hesitation was permitted—two shakos were suspended on each great toe, and swung backwards and forwards with inconsiderate ferocity. On slept our unconscious victim, until one more daring and yet more mischievous untied the rope that supported the lower end of the hammock. A peculiar whistling noise, a thump, and a shout of laughter proclaimed the termination of the joke. Half asleep, and in nocturnal habiliments, a strange-looking figure rose from a

heap of bed clothes and sought out his persecutors. They had fled, and amidst mutterings of vengeance and hasty imprecations, he readjusted his sleeping berth, and with an astonishing bound settled himself once more comfortably to sleep.

There is nothing like sleep to soothe and settle a ruffled temper. About five o'clock next morning we reached our destination, and as we anchored in the harbour and viewed our future residence, we forgot everything, even the recent practical jokes, and set about arranging matters for our individual and collective benefit.

There are but few of us, however, who will forget our trip in that man-of-war, the unexpected fun and jollity that characterized it, or the really true English hospitality and kind behaviour of the officers of that vessel, which added so much to the comfort and pleasure of the second and final portion of our 'Regimental Move.'

J. J. P.

MARLING HALL.—A TALE.

'A jolly place,' said he; 'in times of old,
But something ails it now; the spot is curst.'

I SUPPOSE the life of most country clergymen's daughters is quiet and uneventful; but I think mine was so in a peculiar degree from my tenth to my twentieth year. So long as my dear mother was alive, at least before the two years' illness that terminated her life, occasional visits to and from her relations in the North kept up some connection between Haldane Rectory and the outer world; but on her death, when I was a child of eleven, this intercourse wholly ceased. My uncle Ainslee, indeed, who had married my mother's sister, thinking, I suppose, that my position would be a desolate one, and possibly fancying that my father would marry again, wrote once, offering to receive me into his family and bring me up with his own daughters; but this offer my father, who had no idea of parting with his only child, declined, and the cor-

respondence went no further. To some children the next few years might have been miserable and sad. They were not so to me. I had never known what it was to have a brother or sister; and though the loss of my mother was a grief, the scars of which remain to this day, yet my dear father, in spite of his own sorrow, exerted himself to the utmost to soothe mine, and so far as such a loss can be made up, he succeeded in doing so. I am glad to know now, though I did not at the time, that in seeking to comfort me his own grief was softened. He made a companion of me in a way he had never done before—took me with him in his walks and rides—read with and to me—always welcomed me to his study, and was my sole teacher. One other companion I had, and that was my old nurse, who had tended me from a baby. She had lived in my mother's fa-

mily many years, and was a loving, faithful creature. Though I had passed my nursery days there was no thought of parting with her, and her death, which took place when I was eighteen, was a real grief to my father and myself.

So far as what is usually termed 'society' is regarded we led a very lonely life. Parish work and study pretty well occupied my father's time, and he rarely visited among his own class. Other circumstances besides want of leisure conduced to this. Though an Englishman in heart, my father was by birth an American, and most of his more intimate friends lived in the western hemisphere. Being, moreover, of a reserved habit of mind, he did not readily make new ones, and our neighbourhood was specially unfavourable to his doing so. The neighbouring gentry, if I may so generally term them, consisted almost entirely of two distinct classes—the first, those whose families were of long standing in the county, and who prided themselves accordingly. These had taken no notice of my father when he first came as a stranger among them—not, I believe, from the slightest personal ill-feeling or unkindness, but simply because they never dreamt of visiting outside their own 'set,' as they called it. They numbered among them some men of talent and education, whose acquaintance my father would have valued highly, though he was too proud to go out of his way to seek it; but there were others of whom I have heard him say that it was perhaps well that their heads should be filled with notions of their own worth and importance, as otherwise he feared they would be altogether and entirely empty. I need hardly say that the friendship of these he regarded as no loss.

The other class was on the whole the more wealthy one. It consisted of men who had risen from the ranks and made their own way in the world. It was not on either of these accounts that my father held aloof from them. It was the want of education, joined with great vulgarity and patronizing airs, of those

at least who lived nearest to us, that formed the real barrier and prevented any intimacy.

I was twenty when a family of the name of Thornton first came into our neighbourhood. We soon found out that they belonged to neither of the classes already named. Mr. Thornton's father had got his money in trade, and that fact, of which they made no secret, excluded them from the county circle. He himself had been educated at Oxford, and was an intelligent, gentlemanly man. His son was now at the same university, and likely, it was said, to take high honours, for he combined great cleverness with steadiness and industry. Mrs. Thornton was lady-like and accomplished, and withal so motherly and kind in her manners, that my heart warmed to her at once. The very first time we called on them she said she hoped I should often come and see her if I did not think her dull company; she liked so much to see young fresh faces about her. When they came over to Haldane she renewed this invitation, adding that her own little girls had died in childhood, and that she could not help envying every mother her grown-up daughters. I think it was partly the fact of my having no mother that made her so kind to me. My father soon found out that Mr. Thornton was a reading man, and that was a great bond of sympathy between them. They had a splendid library at Ashcourt, and Mr. Thornton was always as glad to lend a book as my father could be to borrow one, so they got on capitally together.

It was in the early part of February that we got to know them; in April young Mr. Thornton came down for his short Easter vacation. He called one day with his mother, and my father was quite taken with him, pronouncing him the pleasantest, most sensible young man he had ever seen. He, on his side, seemed equally attracted by my father's scholarship, and before they parted an arrangement for reading together in the long vacation had been mutually entered into. Mr. Thornton, senior, seemed

himself surprised when he heard of it, for there had been some talk of a tour in Switzerland in the autumn, but he threw no obstacle in the way of his son's change of plans; and the engagement was faithfully kept to, Mr. Frank Thornton riding over for his two hours' reading every day of the three months he was at home. If he had been his own son my father could hardly have missed him more than he did when he went back to college; nor could he have been much more sorry than he was when we learnt, three weeks later, that he was dangerously ill of scarlet fever.

We drove over to Ashcourt immediately we heard the news, but found that both parents had started for Oxford; so my father had to content himself with writing. They were very kind in letting us hear regularly; and, after a few days, we had the satisfaction of learning that the crisis was past and the patient considered out of danger. At last, in one of Mr. Thornton's letters, there was this sentence:

'Our dear boy is quite convalescent now, I am thankful to say; but future plans puzzle us. I wish you were at a better consulting distance.'

Without more ado, my father declared he would set out for Oxford the next day. 'I have long been wishing to see the old place again,' he said; 'and young Thornton is a particular favourite of mine. I shall like to see with my own eyes how he is.'

So I packed his carpet bag, and he went. Two days after I received the following letter:

'MY DEAR HILDA,

'Young Thornton is much better—almost well; but the doctor orders change, and wishes him to travel. There has been a difficulty as to who should accompany him. The Thorntons are kindly anxious that I should undertake the charge, promising to get my Haldane duties supplied if I will go. Italy is at present talked of. The change would in itself be very pleasant, and I could scarcely have a more agreeable travelling companion. My chief

difficulty is about you, dear child. Mrs. Thornton said at once that you must come and stay with them—she seemed quite pleased at the thought of having you; but, unluckily, yesterday's post brought a letter from the housekeeper at Ashcourt, saying that there are two cases of fever in the village, and she fears that the kitchen-maid is sickening for it; so your going is out of the question. Indeed I should be glad to have you away from the neighbourhood altogether, as it will very likely spread to Haldane. I am writing to-day to your uncle Ainslee, at Marling Hall, asking whether he could receive you for three months. I have requested him to address his answer to Haldane, as I hope to be at home by Saturday. The Thorntons return to Ashcourt as soon as this travelling question is settled. They have no fears for themselves, and are anxious to be among their people in this time of sickness.

'Good-bye for two more days, my darling,

'Your loving FATHER.'

I was quite taken by surprise. A three months' separation seemed to me at the moment as long, perhaps, as one of three years might to another; for since my mother's death I had never been parted from my father for more than a week at a time, and that so very seldom, that on each occasion I had felt the few days of his absence most tediously long. Then the writing to uncle Ainslee; how like that was to a man! and to my father, of all men! After an interval of so many years, abruptly to ask him to take me in for three months—when, too, he had declined his previous offer! I dreaded to see my uncle's answer; dreaded his refusal, whether couched in courteous or uncourteous language; dreaded yet more a constrained, unwilling invitation, knowing, as I did, how much slower my dear father would be to see the constraint and unwillingness than I should be. Always ready himself to do a kindness, possible or impossible, that might be asked of him, he could not understand that everyone else should not be equally so.

Saturday morning brought a letter with the Radstone postmark—the post-town of Marling Hall. The handwriting was, I thought, a lady's. I had to content myself with the outside, for my father had not commissioned me to open it. He did not return till quite the evening.

'Any answer from your uncle, Hilda?' was one of his first questions when tea was over. 'Ah! I see you have put my letters ready for me.' And he hastily broke open the seal of that one.

'From your cousin,' he said; and he read—

'DEAR UNCLE,

'My father has received your letter, and bids me say we shall be glad to see Hilda. If you will let us know the day and hour, the carriage shall meet her at the Detford station.

'Your affectionate niece,
'MARIAN AINSLEE.'

I was sitting on a footstool at my father's feet. He put his hand on my shoulder. 'What does Hilda say to it all?'

'I am very glad you will have the change, papa. I hope it will do you good.'

But I found it hard to keep down the choking feeling that rose in my throat. There was a little pause, and then I asked—

'Why Detford, papa? I thought Radstone was the nearest town.'

'Post-town,' explained my father; 'but there is no station there—no railway communication, indeed. If you look in "Bradshaw" you will see they call Detford the station for Radstone.'

Another pause, and then I said—

'I wish I could recollect more about Marling—even the people I almost forget.'

'You know your aunt is dead?'

'Yes; she died a year before dear mamma. I can't recollect Uncle Ainslee in the least. Cousin Marian I remember just a little: she must be at least ten years older than I—very old I thought her in those days. Next came cousin James, I think. We children didn't see much of him. Then there were the twins:

what were their names? Was it one of them that died some years ago?'

'My dear, I don't remember. There were so many of them. Wasn't there another boy?'

'Oh, yes—Walter; just my age. He was a dreadful tease. Then there were the little ones—Flora and Catty; not that they can have been really much younger than I, only I thought so then.'

'It will be a good thing for you to be thrown a little with girls of your own age, Hilda,' said my father. 'I am afraid you would grow into an old woman before your time if you never left your old father's side.'

He tried to speak gaily, but his voice trembled a little. We were each comforting ourselves with the thought that the separation was for the other's good; but the next week was rather sad for both.

CHAPTER II.

The arrangements were hurried on as fast as possible, on Mr. Frank Thornton's account, and my father was also anxious to get me away from the neighbourhood of the fever without delay. So it was agreed that we should both leave home on the Tuesday week, travelling together as far as Wilport, where my father would see me into my train, and then go on himself to Oxford. The clergyman who was to take my father's duty in his absence, and occupy the Rectory, arrived on Monday afternoon, and the two gentlemen sat up to a late hour talking. I was rather disappointed, for I had hoped that we should have had this last evening to ourselves.

Our train started from Fairbridge at 10.5 the next morning. It was a cold, foggy day, and the five miles' drive in the open pony-chaise was very chilling. We were in good time for the train, and got a carriage to ourselves, much to our satisfaction, for the presence of the boy who drove us had been a great bar to conversation in the pony-carriage. But the twenty minutes between Fairbridge and Wilport were gone in no time. I had to get into another train there, and as it was not.

yet in, we were glad to turn into the waiting-room and warm ourselves by the blazing fire. I don't know how it was; I suppose we were so engrossed with our talk that we did not hear the bell announcing the arrival of the train, and when, on hearing the second, I gathered up my goods and we hurried out, we had the mortification of seeing it slowly steaming out of the station. What was to be done? My father proposed telegraphing to Marling Hall to say I should not arrive till late in the evening, as he did not like the idea of my reaching Detford after dark with no one to meet me, and he could not take me on with him to Oxford, still less back to Haldane. On consulting 'Bradshaw,' however, for the necessary information, he made what appeared a pleasing discovery.

'You will do it, after all, Hilda. The 12.20 train is a fast one, stops at none of the small stations. You will just catch the train at Mudbury; it leaves five minutes after you get there, and I will try to find a *through* carriage, so that you may have no change. I shall be able to see you off; there is a train at 12.40, that will bring me in quite soon enough.'

So far so good, and we neither of us regretted that quiet hour's chat in the waiting-room.

My father secured for me a comfortable seat in a first-class carriage, where was a lady going as far as Mudbury, he ascertained; and then he went up to the guard, a tall, fine-looking man, and interchanged a few words with him. As they came together towards the carriage I heard the guard say, 'With pleasure, sir,' and my father answered, 'Thank you,' and then returned to me.

'This carriage goes through, Hilda,' he said, 'and the guard has promised to look in on you at Mudbury, and see that you have pleasant travelling companions. Good-bye, my darling.'

One farewell kiss, then the hoarse whistle of the engine warned him to descend, and we were off.

My companion was not communicative. She wrapped herself up in her railway rug and went appa-

rently fast asleep, not rousing herself again till we had passed the last station before Mudbury. Then, having gathered up her things in readiness for leaving the carriage, she drew out her watch and remarked—

'They never are punctual on this line.'

I instinctively looked at mine, but, not knowing at what time we were due, was not much the wiser.

'Are we much behind time?' I ventured to ask.

'Nearly twenty minutes,' was the reply, and my heart sank, for my father had spoken of only five minutes to catch the train.

'You are going beyond Mudbury?' asked the lady.

'Yes, I am going on to Detford, but I am afraid the train will be gone.'

'You are booked through, I suppose? Ah! then you need not fear. The trains are arranged to suit each other—they will be sure to wait.'

It was a consoling belief, and I was strengthened in it by the remembered fact that mine was a 'through' carriage: so, completely reassured, I settled myself down again on the cushions. In less than five minutes we reached the station.

'I hope you will have a pleasant journey. Good morning,' said the lady, and I was left in sole possession of the carriage. I expected every moment that the guard would look in, according to promise, but he did not make his appearance. Whether owing to his having more important work to see to, or to my father—objecting as he did on principle to what he called 'bribery and corruption'—not having backed his request by the 'tip' of half-a-crown, I am not able to say; but the fact of his daughter being 'under charge of the guard' was, as I suspect is frequently the case in like instances, a pleasing delusion, for he never came near me all day.

'We are so late, to begin with,' I thought, 'that they will surely get off with as little delay as possible;' but five, ten minutes passed, and still we remained stationary. My

old fears began to revive. I put my head out of window and addressed a passing porter.

'How soon shall we be going on?' I asked.

'Where are you for, miss?'

'Detford station,' I replied. 'I thought there was to be no stopping here.'

'You'll have to wait a good bit yet, miss. Next train goes at 5.15. It's 2.40 now.'

So we had lost the train after all.

'What time shall we get to Detford?' I asked, despairingly; but the porter did not hear me; he had passed on with his truck. Resolved to ascertain the point somehow or other, I got out and made my way to the waiting-room, where the Company's time-tables were pasted up. 'Mudbury, dep. 5.15; arr. Detford 8.20.' There it was, plain enough. It would be quite dark before I got to the end of my journey; but the only thing now was to make the best of it. A civil porter volunteered to look after my luggage and call me when the train was in, and I passed the intervening time as comfortably as possible in an arm-chair by the fire. It was growing dusk when I was summoned; it was quite dark before we reached Thurle, and Detford was some stations beyond. I had the carriage quite to myself, and had much ado to keep awake. I was almost dreaming when a gruff voice shouted. 'Detford, Detford, any for Detford?' close beside me; and seizing my bag and umbrella, I turned the handle of the door, which was not locked, and sprang out. A minute after I was standing on the platform, watching the lights of the train as they disappeared in the distance.

'Claim your luggage,' called out the station-master, and being the only passenger that had alighted, I proceeded to do so without much difficulty. It was a strange position to be in, standing there in the lamp-light, away from all my friends, with no one near but the station-master and the one Detford porter. My father would hardly have parted from me so cheerfully had he contemplated the possibility.

'Where do you wish your luggage taken, ma'am? Have you any friends to meet you?' asked the station-master, compassionately, for I am sure I must have looked forlorn enough.

'I did expect to be met,' I answered, 'but we missed the train at Mudbury. Can you tell me whether there has been any one here from Marling Hall?'

'The carriage was here to meet the 4.50,' said the porter. 'I understood they was expecting a young lady by that train.'

I was glad of this confirmation of the account I had given of myself.

'They might have come again to meet this train,' said the station-master. 'Bring over the lady's boxes, Tom, and we'll see on the other side of the gates.'

We had to go up a steep covered way, and passing through a little gate, came out on the road close to the railway bridge. An omnibus was there, waiting apparently for passengers, but no carriage.

'Does this go Marling Hall way?' I asked, feeling that anything was better than nothing.

'No, miss,' replied the porter; 'it goes straight to Radstone. There ain't no signs of the Marling Hall carriage, as I can see.'

'I suppose I can get a cab,' said I.

'They keep two horses at the Detford Arms over there,' said the station-master, 'but they're mostly out, I think. However, there might be one in. Run over, Tom, and see.'

A gleam of light was thrown across the road by the lamp suspended in the porch of the little public house opposite, from which emerged at this instant the omnibus-driver, who had, no doubt, been fortifying himself against the cold. He and the station-master began a little aside conversation, of which I fancied myself the object, but I was too much occupied in watching the movements of the porter to concern myself about them. He could not really have been long away, but it seemed to me as if the talk he was having with some invisible person inside the porch would never come to an end. At last he came back.

'Mr. Dobson is very sorry, miss, but both the 'osses is out, and won't be back till to-morrow.'

What was I to do? I looked round in despair; but at this juncture the omnibus driver came to my assistance.

'If the lady was to go in the 'bus to Radstone, she'd get a cab easy enough there to take her on to Marling Hall.'

It was a roundabout way of getting to my uncle's house, Radstone being at least as far from Marling as Detford was; but no doubt it was the best thing to be done, and I was thankful for any way of getting out of my predicament. I thanked the station-master cordially; I slipped a shilling into the porter's hand—I did not think that under the circumstances even my father would have objected to the proceeding—received an assurance from the conductor that my boxes were 'all right,' and off we rumbled. Arrived at Radstone, I was set down at the door of a well-lighted inn, my boxes were placed in the passage, and I myself was ushered into a cosy little parlour.

'The cab will be round in no time,' said the conductor; and presently I heard his voice explaining the circumstances of my case to the landlady, I supposed. A few minutes after, that good woman made her appearance in the little parlour. She was a stout, rosy-cheeked body, seemingly very good-natured, and indubitably very talkative. She insisted on my taking the warmest seat, and was very anxious to bring me a cup of tea; but this I declined, dreading any fresh cause of delay. She then stationed herself near the chimneypiece, and after a few preliminary remarks on the coldness of the night, the misfortune of my having missed the train, her hopes that the men would not be long in bringing round the cab, &c., she suddenly observed—

'You'll likely have been to Marling Hall before, Miss Murrey.'

I started at hearing my name from the lips of a stranger. But an instant's thought convinced me that she must have obtained the information from the labels on my boxes

in the hall; and not very much pleased either with the question or the mode of address, I answered, somewhat shortly—

'Some years ago.'

Possibly this was just what she wanted to know, for she remarked—

'There's been many changes at the Hall of late years.'

'I suppose so,' I said, imagining that she referred to alterations consequent on the death of my aunt.

'They used to see a sight of company in old days,' the landlady went on.

And I rejoined, 'Yes;' thinking, as I spoke, of the Christmas-trees, children's parties, and all sorts of gay doings that had been going on when I was there with my mother, as a child.

'There's scarce a carriage goes in at their park gates from year's end to year's end now,' continued the landlady, 'unless it's their own, and that only takes the young ladies out for an airing once in a way. It's not visiting they goes now.'

She seemed pretty well up in their affairs, and I could not help wondering whether she would be able to enlighten me on that question my father could not answer, viz., which of my cousins it was of whose death we had heard. But I did not like the idea of hearing my uncle's family talked over by this woman, so, to turn the conversation, I said—

'Was that the cab I heard just now?

'Hardly yet, I think, miss. The maid will let you know directly it comes. She has my orders about it; and then they will have to put the boxes up. I've no doubt, miss, that when you were at Marling Hall you heard tell about the white lady, and all that.'

'That was said to haunt the white staircase?' I said, quickly, as another remembrance came back to me. 'O, yes! I suppose there are few old houses without some such stories.'

'I won't say that much, miss; but as for this one, I've heard more of it than I altogether like. My cousin was lady's-maid to Miss Ainslee at one time.'

'Was she?' I asked, finding I was expected to say something.

'For four months;' and the landlady sank her voice mysteriously; 'and then she gave notice, though she had an easy enough place of it, and good wages and all. And she told me she wouldn't go back again, not for 100%. As for myself, I don't know that I would sleep there one night for as much again.'

Things were going rather far.

'There is the carriage!' I exclaimed, as I heard the sound of wheels driving up to the door, and I hastened out, not sorry that the landlady's communication should be broken off in the middle.

CHAPTER III.

It was too dark for me to attempt to recognize any objects on our way; even the house was hardly discernible as we drove up to it through the park. I had alighted and paid the driver, and my boxes were all taken down before the bell was answered by a tall footman, who looked as if he were surprised to see me—and no wonder—at that time of night.

'Bring the luggage inside the door, my man,' he said to the driver; and then to me, in quite a different tone, 'This way, if you please, ma'am.'

He led the way from the entrance lobby, on each side of which were ranged pots of camellias, through a long hall hung with portraits. Heavy baize curtains shut this out from the passage, and on passing through them a female figure came forward to meet us. There was not light enough for me to see her features, but instinctively I knew that it was my cousin Marian.

'Hilda Murrey?' she said, inquiringly. 'We had given up all hopes of seeing you to-night. Your father said you would be here by the 4.50 train. We sent the carriage to meet it.'

'I was to have come by that, but I missed my train,' I explained. And without further questioning, my cousin, still holding me by the hand, led me into the room she had

just quitted. It was an old-fashioned, low-ceilinged room, lined almost with book-shelves. Dark crimson curtains were drawn across the bow-window, and the carpet was of the same colour. But I paid less attention to the room itself than to the two girls who were its occupants, and who rose as we entered. From their youthful looks, I concluded that they were my two younger cousins, but, striking as was the contrast in their appearance, I did not remember them well enough to know which was which. One had black wavy hair, dark eyes and eyebrows, a fresh colour in her cheeks, and a general look of health and good spirits. The other was slight and pale. The blue veins on her forehead, the dark shades under her peculiarly violet eyes, gave to her face a look of painful delicacy, which was perhaps heightened by the luxuriance of the soft brown hair that was thrown loosely back from her temples.

'Hilda has come, after all,' said my cousin Marian; 'she missed her train, and must be very tired and cold. Will you relieve her of some of her wraps, Catty? I suppose you hardly remember these girls, Hilda—the "little ones," as they used to be called?'

'Not in the least,' I answered.

'I have no doubt we shall soon be very good friends,' said the dark-haired girl, as she took my heavy cloak from my shoulders. 'I am so glad you have come!' And her hearty kiss gave a pleasanter sense of welcome than my elder cousin's quiet measured tones had done.

The other girl now advanced and put a small white hand into mine, saying, 'How d'you do?' in a nervous, trembling voice. Cousin Marian looked at her anxiously.

'You mustn't sit up, Flo, dear. It is getting late. Catty, I dare say Hilda would like to take off her jacket and hat. Will you take her to her room?'

Throwing her arms round my waist, my cousin guided me through the dimly-lighted passages, past the baize curtains of the hall. I turned instinctively into the first opening to the left, at the sight of the broad

stone flight of steps, the well-remembered 'white staircase.'

'Oh! shall we go this way?' said Catty. 'We may as well; it's as short, if not shorter.'

And we began the ascent. At the first turn in the staircase we came upon a doorway leading apparently down a long passage.

'That's the old part of the house,' said my cousin, 'where papa sleeps, and Marian, and every one.—Are you nervous, Hilda?'

'I don't know,' I replied, startled by the suddenness of the question; 'I don't think I am.'

'I hope not. It's dreadfully stupid when people are; I don't know myself what the feeling is. You wouldn't believe, now, that there's scarcely any one in the house goes up these stairs but myself when Jem's not at home, and Walter, of course, and none of them would dream of such a thing when once daylight is gone. Flo would not do it to save her life.'

'Would she not?' I said, reminded irresistibly of what the landlady had said. 'Oh! I'm not nervous in that way at all—not about anything supernatural, I mean.'

'It is a good thing,' said Catty, 'for you and I shall have all this part of the house to ourselves. There certainly is some advantage in having the pick and choose of all the best rooms. It's a shame to leave them unoccupied, I think. Do you remember this window, Hilda? It has a fine look out on the park, as you will see to-morrow.'

A little further on another passage opened on the staircase.

'This is our way,' said Catty, turning towards it; but I hung back. The staircase did not end here. There were a few more steps, leading to a single, closed door.

'The white room!' I exclaimed, a sudden recollection crossing my mind. And as I said the name, there seemed to pass before me a vision of white muslin, blue ribbons, and floating golden hair, and I remembered that this was the room occupied by the twins in old days.

'It is not locked, is it? May I look in?' And taking silence for

consent, I went up the steps and turned the handle. Catty stood at the door with the candle in her hand as I went in, but she did not say a word. It might well be called the 'white room.' The two beds with their snowy hangings, the white window-curtains, the clean towels on the horse, nay, even the plastered, unpapered walls, all corroborated its name. On one of the beds lay an evening dress of white tataran, placed ready, it would seem, for the wearer. A wreath of artificial flowers lay on the dressing-table, and some jewels glittered beside it. It was still occupied, then. I turned round in surprise. 'Is this your room, Catty?'

'No, no; no one sleeps here now.' And as she spoke the whiteness of everything about seemed reflected in her face, it had turned so pale. 'Come away, Hilda.' And I followed her down the steps. The passage was a very short one. It led into a much longer one, at right angles with it, along which were ranged several doors. At the one opposite the short passage Catty halted. 'This is your room, Hilda,' she said, quite cheerfully again; 'I hope you will find it airy enough.'

I should think it was, indeed; almost dismally so, had it not been for the bright fire flickering on the hearth. The ceiling was as lofty as that in the library was low, and it was altogether so large, that I believe the dining-room and drawing-room of Haldane Rectory, though they were generally considered good-sized rooms, might have been comfortably set down in it.

'I live next door,' said Catty, setting down the candle; 'and I hope you will often visit me there. Beyond is a rather smaller room, which is Walter's when he is at home.'

'Walter is just my age, is he not?'

'I suppose so, if, as I believe, you are twenty-one. By rights he is two years older than Flo, and ought to be her special brother, but to all intents and purposes he is just my age, and we are always together when he is at home. You can't think what a difference his being here makes; such a scrimmage he

and I make up and down the white staircase, and all over the house.'

'Is he at college?' I asked.

'Oh dear, no! he was a terrible dunce at learning, always. He is a sailor, the only thing he was fit for. He has not been home for nine months, and won't be again, most likely, for as many more.'

A tear twinkled in her eye as she spoke, but the next minute she said, with a little laugh—

'Talking of college, my eldest brother, Jem, is the clever one of us. He is a Fellow, you know, and has learnt any amount of Latin and Greek. You will see him soon; he always comes home for Christmas. Don't stay to beautify yourself,' as I glanced in the looking-glass, and put a hand up to my disordered hair; 'I could lend you a brush in a minute, but indeed it's not worth while. I assure you no one will notice you. Do you know it is past half-past ten? They will be wondering what has become of us.'

We went this time to the end of the long passage, and then down a wooden staircase. Catty pushed open a door.

'One minute, Hilda; you must look in at the dining-room; wouldn't it be glorious for a dance?' And she began to whirl round on the polished floor.

It was indeed a splendidly-sized room, and I said so.

'And to think that it serves every day for four people to dine in! Isn't it ridiculous? Why, we might have any sized dinner-parties, but papa and Marian won't hear of it. Walter is always at them about it when he is at home, wanting them to give a dance, or something. But it's no use; so we have to content ourselves with waltzing together every evening with no music. Don't you enjoy a good waltz?'

'I never learnt. You don't know what a quiet life we lead at Haldane. I never danced even a quadrille since I was quite a little girl.'

'You can hardly live quieter than we do here; and as for learning, why I never learnt. No more did Walter; we taught ourselves. I dare say a dancing-master would make depreciating remarks if he

saw us, but we manage it to our own satisfaction, and that's all I care for. By-the-by, Hilda, I am using you shamefully to keep you from your tea; you must be starving.'

When we re-entered the library the table was bountifully spread, and Marian had taken her place behind the hissing urn. Flora had disappeared, but in her stead there was a handsome, white-haired man, evidently the master of the house. I had been told that my uncle was the same age as my father, within a few weeks, but I should have taken him for at least ten years older. His form was much more bent, his brow more wrinkled, and a stern, sorrowful expression was imprinted on his features.

'You are welcome to Marling Hall, niece,' he said, as he advanced to meet me; but he had scarcely taken my hand before he dropped it again, and turning away abruptly, began pacing up and down the room with a troubled look on his face. Something in his manner puzzled me. Could I in any way have reminded him of my aunt, his lost wife? But no; a minute's reflection convinced me that that was impossible. From all that I had heard of her Catty must have resembled her much more. Possibly, I thought, the abruptness of address was habitual to him.

Seated at the tea-table, I had a better view of my cousin Marian than I had had before. She was taller than her younger sisters, *that* I had observed when first she took me into the room; now I noticed, to my surprise, that silver threads were apparent here and there in her dark hair, which, together with deeply-marked lines between her eyebrows, gave her an appearance of greater age than I had been prepared for. There was also a wearied, careworn look in her face, as though the responsibilities devolving on her since her mother's death had weighed too heavily on her, crushing out her youth and spirits before their time.

My uncle did not join us at our meal. He presently left the room, and did not appear again. As soon

as we had finished tea Cousin Marian dismissed Catty and me to our rooms, saying that I must be very tired, as, in truth, I was.

CHAPTER IV.

I had so seldom, since my childhood, passed a night from home, that going to sleep in a strange place was in itself a difficult matter; and the circumstances of my unexpectedly long and anxious journey increased the difficulty on this occasion, tenfold. Whenever I closed my eyes each scene that I had passed through was reproduced with painful vividness, accompanied by the whistle of the engine, the rumbling of the carriages, and every other sound incidental to railway travelling. In the hope of diverting my thoughts into a fresh channel, and so inducing sleep, I had recourse at last to the well-known but simple expedient of trying to picture to myself a flock of sheep jumping over a gap in a hedge, and counting each as it jumped. But even this resource failed me. I succeeded, indeed, in erecting my imaginary hedge, and in marshalling my sheep in a goodly flock on the other side, but as I watched them, instead of preparing to make the leap, they one by one resolved themselves into railway porters, who, maliciously grinning at my discomfiture, marched off wheeling trucks of luggage down the field, which likewise contracted and flattened, until it assumed the proportions and appearance of a wooden platform. In despair I opened my eyes, and these hateful men—I speak of the feelings with which I at the moment regarded them—vanished on the instant with all their paraphernalia. How I longed for something external to take off my thoughts! But all around was so dark and still that it seemed a vain wish. I could but just distinguish the outline of the two large windows. The fire was all but out. I watched its last spark die away. I listened to the peculiar click of the cinders that continued some time after, and when that sound

ceased I became aware of another, that I had not noticed before—the sound of running water. At first I wondered what the cause could be, but then I remembered the river that wound through the Marling Hall grounds, and I knew, that the occasional splash I heard must be caused by the water flowing down over the stone weir that had been built across it at some little distance from the house. This river was so connected with the fate of the lady who, by the superstitious and weak-minded, was said still to haunt the place, that it was not strange that her story, as told to me in my childhood, and but imperfectly remembered since, should rise to my mind at the same time. I had forgotten some of the minor details, but the general outline was as follows:—

Soon after the building of the modern part of the house, which included, besides the white staircase, the entrance hall, the dining and two drawing-rooms, as well as the lofty suite of bedrooms above them, the then owner of Marling Hall became anxious that his daughter should marry the heir of a neighbouring estate, which was, in fact, only separated from his own by the river in question—he being at that time a suitor for her hand; and thus, for she was an only child, unite the two properties. The young lady was, however, averse to the match, and her father, exasperated by her continued opposition to his wishes, had recourse to severity. He kept her a close prisoner to her room for some months, at the end of which time it was announced that she was willing to submit to his parental authority, and preparations were made on a grand scale for the marriage. On the night, however, before what was to have been her wedding-day, her father's vigilance being somewhat relaxed, the poor girl contrived to escape down the white stairs and into the park. Finding herself pursued she turned her steps towards the river, and before she could be overtaken had plunged in and was carried a good way down by the stream. They got her out

at last, but it was too late. The father reached the spot just in time to see the dripping, lifeless form of his daughter laid on the bank. From that day all peace was over for the old man at Marling Hall. In every part of the house, but more especially in the new rooms he had built, and on the white staircase, he was haunted by a white figure that raised towards him reproachful eyes that he well knew, and then vanished. It drove him from his home at last, and he died a year or two later in a foreign land; his branch of the family becoming extinct in him, and the estate passing to a distant cousin.

I must have dozed off while thinking over this sad catastrophe, for what followed was certainly a dream. I thought that, being unable to sleep, I rose and went to the window, and drawing aside the blind looked out at the river. That by the light of the moon, which just then broke through the clouds that had obscured it, I could discern a tall, shadowy figure, dressed in white, moving along the edge of the water, just as the drowned heiress of Marling was said to have been sometimes seen on moonlight nights. That as I stood watching her, fascinated as it were, and unable to draw back, she left the river side and came across the grass towards the house. And that, when exactly opposite the window where I was standing, she raised the head that had been hitherto bent on the ground; and that, to my astonishment, instead of the features of a stranger, I recognized those of one of my fair-haired twin cousins. I thought that the blue eyes looked pleadingly at me, and that then she passed on, and I knew instinctively that she was coming into the house, and would soon be ascending the white staircase. In anxious suspense I listened for her footfall, and while listening I suddenly awoke. My first feeling was of intense relief to find that it was only a dream; the next minute I clenched my hands and held my breath, for as surely as I lay there, beyond all doubt and dreaming, a footstep *was* coming up the stone staircase.

There could be no mistake. The peculiar tap with its reverberating echo, that cannot be described for those who have never heard it, and has never been really heard but by those who have listened to it as I did in the dead of night when all the house was still, could not have been caused by anything else. The blood seemed to freeze in my cheeks, and my heart beat audibly as the steps came on, up the stairs. So far as I could judge they passed by the opening into the passage, and went on to the white room. I fancied I heard the sound of a door being opened—at any rate it was some minutes before I heard the footsteps descending again. They could not have got to the bottom of the staircase before they suddenly ceased—the echo died away and all was still.

I had told Catty a few hours before that I was not nervous. What would she have said to it now could she have felt my clammy hands? I was ashamed myself of the terror that mastered me, and endeavoured my utmost to reason it down. Might not that footstep be accounted for in a natural way? One of the servants possibly was going to or from her room. But then I remembered Catty's assertion that we two were the only people sleeping in the new part of the house, and, moreover, that no one else would venture to go up the white staircase in the dusk. Who, then, would dare to be there in the middle of the night? For a long time I lay wide awake, listening for a sound that did not, however, return. At last, having commended myself to His care, in whose hands are the spirits of the dead as well as of the living, I fell fast asleep.

CHAPTER V.

What a difference daylight makes. When I awoke next morning I could almost have laughed at the tremors of the preceding night. That which had been at the time so terribly *real* I was now disposed to regard as possibly nothing more than a freak of fancy. And even if it were

not so, what use was there in troubling my head any further about the matter? Surely it was wiser and better to banish it altogether from my thoughts. And for the time I did.

The view from the large windows interested me much, recalling, as it did, scenes from my childhood that had for long slumbered in my memory. There was the smooth, clear river, on which we had had so many pleasant boating excursions. I could catch a glimpse of the boat-house under the willow-tree through the tracery of the leafless trees. Did they ever make use of it now, I wondered. But I had not much time for looking out of window. My watch informed me that it was a quarter past ten, and Catty had named nine as their usual breakfast hour. I dressed with what haste I could, and was on the point of leaving my room when, after a very gentle tap at the door, Catty herself came in.

'Oh! you are up,' she exclaimed. 'I came to see whether you were ready to have your breakfast brought to you. Marian would not have you called. She said you would be so tired. We have had ours some time. We knew you would rather we did not wait for you.'

'I should think not,' I said; 'I am sorry I was not down at the right time, but I overslept myself.'

'We breakfast upstairs in the morning-room in summer,' said Catty, as we went down, 'but in winter the library is so much more cozy, we use it for everything except dinner.'

'Have you a piano there?' I asked.

'No, but there's one in the dining-room, and there's always a fire there. The one in the drawing-room is a beauty—you must try it some day. It can't be heard from the library, fortunately. Flo can't bear the sound of it. It belonged to poor ——'

We had reached the library door, and she broke off short. My cousin Marian greeted me kindly. Her way of talking was a little stiff and formal, but that seemed to go naturally with her tall figure and somewhat stately carriage. I was more than ever struck by the wan, almost

haggard look in her face. Perhaps the long black silk dress she wore in some degree added to this effect. Flora was seated in an arm-chair, reading. She seemed startled and fluttered when I addressed her, and her colour went and came nervously. My uncle was not present: he always breakfasted in his study, Catty said.

When I had had my breakfast Marian proposed that Catty and I should walk in the grounds. It was a bright, clear day, though cold, and we spent a very pleasant two hours in this manner. We walked chiefly by the river side, and once or twice along the drive to the park gates, but not beyond them; 'Marian would not like it,' Catty said with a little sigh, as though she would have enjoyed rather more liberty. My cousin was very chatty and easy to get on with. She asked a great many questions about my life at Haldane, and had plenty to say in return about hers, more especially whatever concerned her pet brother, Walter. Of her eldest brother, James, she spoke less; not very much about Marian and Flora; but I gathered from the little she did say that the latter, although so near her in age, was, from ill health or some other cause, not much of a companion to her; and that while Walter was away she led a pretty lonely life. On the subject of the twins, where I was most anxious for information, she said not a word; and, fearful of opening some closed wound, I did not like to be the first to speak of them. I had no doubt now that it was one of them of whose death we had heard some years before, and it seemed probable that the other had also died in the long interval that had elapsed between my mother's death and this renewal of intercourse with Marling Hall. The possibility of her being married crossed my mind, but I put it aside as unlikely, as in that case Catty would have been sure to mention her.

We dined early, in the large dining-room. My uncle was of the party, but he hardly spoke, and his presence seemed a constraint on Catty's tongue, so we had a very

silent meal. When it was over we adjourned to the library, my uncle, I suppose, to his study, for we did not see him again till tea-time. As soon as the fire was lighted in my room I went up to unpack, and Catty accompanied me, on the pretext of helping—in reality, I fancy, for the sake of the chat, for all she did was to sit and look on. In point of fact, we gained so much in a sense of freedom whatever we lost in snugness, that we were glad to linger over the fire for some time after the work was done. We were summoned down stairs by the tea-bell, and passed the rest of the evening in the library. My uncle, so long as he remained after tea—which was but a short time—sat and read, and Flora did the same, Marian knitted, Catty and I played at draughts. As long as my uncle was in the room we spoke in whispers, I hardly know why. Even when he was gone Catty was far from being the same that she had been when alone with me. Her merry laugh sounded out of place here, and Marian's grave 'Don't be boisterous, Catty,' at her least approach to gaiety, was enough to depress even wilder spirits. I myself felt stupid and tired, and was not at all sorry when, on the clock striking ten, Marian rang the bell for our candles, saying that I looked in want of another good night's rest. Another! So much for her knowledge of my last night's experience. I had found it pretty easy in the day-time to banish from my mind the remembrance of my alarm, but as the evening drew on it had returned somewhat uncomfortably to my recollection. As Catty and I went up the white staircase to our rooms, the very sound of our own footsteps on the stone steps caused an unpleasant thrill to go through me. Some fear of Catty's thinking me very silly, perhaps more the recollection of the look in her face as she stood at the door of the white room the night before, had withheld me from saying anything about it to her through the day. Now, had I wished it ever so much, I could not have done it. My jaw stiffened at the very thought of

speaking about it. This state of feeling was, I feared, a bad preparation for a good night's rest; but, after all, exhausted Nature got the better of it, and I slept soundly till the morning.

CHAPTER VI.

It would be needless to describe the next fortnight in detail; one day passed so like another. I saw a great deal of Catty during this time, of the rest of the household comparatively little. My uncle only appeared at meal-times, and was invariably grave and taciturn on these occasions. Now and then I saw him walking in the grounds, but always alone, and with that listlessness of manner which betokens one who takes exercise for the sake of habit or health rather than for any pleasure he expects to derive from it. Marian was much busied with household matters, and when not so occupied all her time and attention were devoted to Flora. The tender solicitude with which she watched her, too evidently, I sometimes thought, to be good for one of her nervous temperament, was more like that of a mother than of an elder sister, and I wondered that it did not meet with more response. Not that there was anything to complain of in Flora's manner. She was perfectly docile and obedient to Marian, never murmured—as Catty was sometimes disposed to do—at the restrictions, severe, I fancied, for girls of their age, that she laid on them in some matters; nor did she ever display towards her the irritability that occasionally manifested itself in her intercourse with her younger sister. It was rather the total absence of any demonstration of affection, the sad indifference with which she received every token of Marian's loving anxiety for her, that pained one. Every fine day Flora went out, but never with Catty and me. Sometimes she took a drive in the carriage accompanied by Marian, but more frequently she paced up and down the flagged terrace that fronted the old part of the house, sometimes by the hour together, and always

alone. Once, thinking it must be dull work for her by herself, I proposed to Catty that we should join her; but she replied so decidedly that Flo would not like it, that I did not venture to moot the question again. Catty and I spent most of our time together; we walked in the grounds and practised duets, worked and read in company through the day, and, I fancy, equally dreaded the stiff, constrained evenings in the library.

But more than the stiffness and constraint, I dreaded the shadow that fell over the house as each short winter day drew to its close. I suppose a certain amount of dreariness must attach itself in every instance to a large empty house at nightfall; and to me the effect was heightened by my recollections, faint and imperfect though they were, of what Marling Hall used to be in days gone by. The drawing-room, in which such a merry party used to assemble every night, was never used now, the shutters being kept closed even by day. Once Catty had them opened for me to see the room, and half suggested that I should try the piano, but it did not seem worth while to remove the canvas covering, and everything was so chilly and desolate-looking, that I was anxious to get away again.

One thing in the room had a melancholy interest for me. It was the portrait of a lady—like enough to Catty for me to recognize her as my aunt—and two flaxen-haired children, one by her side, the other on her knee, who I knew must be my twin cousins. It seemed a good opportunity for asking about them; but Catty turned away with such a sigh, that I did not like even to linger before the picture; and so we went.

But I could not get that painting out of my head. All the rest of the day the three faces haunted me. I could hardly sleep for thinking of them. Had there been anything peculiarly saddening about the death of those two sisters, I wondered; and was it in any way the cause of the gloom that had more or less overspread all the household? I had

no means of judging. Catty, open on every other subject, preserved a marked silence on this, and my other cousins never made the least reference to it.

From that day a sort of undefined apprehension, that I had not been able to shake off entirely since the alarm of my first night here, gained ground in spite of myself. It would be difficult to say what it was that I feared, as involuntarily, when daylight declined, I hurried through the dimly-lighted passages, and could only by a great effort force myself to go up the white staircase in the dusk, if Catty was not with me. Certainly I did not believe in the white lady of Marling Hall; and yet I could not get rid of the dread of seeing some time, in the dim light, the fluttering of a white dress, or meeting again the look of the sad blue eyes that had in my dream been raised to mine. I would not for the world have had Catty know of my fears, and I don't think she had the least suspicion of them, for I was vexed with myself for feeling so, and summoned to my aid all the self-command I could muster.

My uncle's family, as I said before, lived very quietly; and I had been more than three weeks in the house when, for the first time, I heard the front-door bell. We were all—that is, my cousins and myself—in the library, waiting for the summons to our early dinner, and the visitor was ushered in there. He was a pleasant-looking, elderly gentleman, and was introduced to me by the name of Dr. Ferrars. He seemed quite at home with the family, and began an animated conversation with Marian, concerning the ascent of a balloon that had lately come off in the neighbourhood. He had been present, it seemed, and the account he gave of the affair was most graphic and amusing. I was quite surprised by the way in which Marian brightened up, and the interest that her questions showed she took in it. Even Flora, I observed, laid down her book and listened; and when, by-and-by, Dr. Ferrars turned to her with some remark, she answered quite naturally, and with scarcely any of the nervous

shrinking of manner she generally evinced when spoken to. Only Catty was unusually grave (and silent. She had the air of one watching goings-on that she did not quite understand.

They were still talking when dinner was announced; and Dr. Ferrars, without any apparent hesitation, accepted Marian's invitation to join us at our meal. We found my uncle in the dining-room. He greeted Dr. Ferrars rather stiffly, I thought, and the conversation that ensued was a very one-sided affair, till the doctor once more drew the ladies into it. He seemed particularly interested in anything that Flora said.

After dinner my uncle retired to his study, as usual, and we returned to the library. 'I know you are quite a florist, Dr. Ferrars,' said Marian, presently: 'we have some chrysanthemums in the conservatory that seem to me unusually fine, but I want your opinion; will you come and see them?'

'With pleasure,' returned the doctor; 'and if you will allow me to order my carriage at once, Miss Ainslee, I will take leave of the ladies now, as I shall not see them again.'

Soon after they were gone, Flora too left the room. After a cloudy morning, the sun was now shining brightly, and she was gone to prepare for her favourite walk on the terrace. As soon as we were left alone, I observed—

'Dr. Ferrars spoke of going away at once, did he not? but I don't think the carriage has gone by yet.'

Catty gave me an odd look, as she answered—

'Nor will, for some time yet, you may be sure. There always are chrysanthemums or something to be looked at after one of his visits, and the doctor is a wonderful time giving his opinion. It has given me quite new ideas as to the value of flowers.'

'Surely Marian would not think of him as——' I hesitated; 'why, he must be twice her age.'

'My dear Hilda, how you jump at conclusions! Of course I didn't mean anything of that sort. But

indeed I don't know what to think at all. I am quite mystified; only I can't believe that the doctor's visits are so haphazard as he tries to make them appear. However, there is no good worrying about it. See what a lovely day it has turned out. We must have a walk.'

And so the subject dropped.

CHAPTER VII.

Marling Hall was in the parish of Newton-Magna, though two miles distant; and thither we always went to church on Sunday mornings. Wet or fine, we ladies always drove; my uncle invariably walked. I could have envied him sometimes, on fine frosty days, and so I am sure did Catty; but Marian made a point of never leaving Flora. Uncle Ainslee evidently preferred solitude; and she did not like us to walk by ourselves.

It happened one Sunday that, there being every promise of a fine day when we started, we went in the hooded phaeton instead of the brougham, and took no provision against rain in the way of umbrellas. While we were in church, however, the weather changed, and by the time service was over, it was raining heavily. The hood would only protect two; so Marian decided that she and Flora should drive home at once, sending back the carriage for us, who were to wait meantime in the church. The sexton lived close by, so there was no difficulty about its being left open.

The Newton-Magna church was small, and very simply built. It had no architectural beauty to boast of; but the stained glass in the east window was, I knew, much admired. My acquaintance with painted windows was too limited to put me in a position to criticise, even had I been so disposed. But neither had I ever been able fully to enter into the enthusiastic eagerness shown by some people on the subject; and much as I admired the stained light cast on the stones when the sun shone through, I had often found it difficult to appreciate the peculiar beauty that others seemed to see in the windows themselves when seen

by ordinary daylight. This east window seemed, to my untrained eye, much the same in appearance as others I had seen, except that perhaps the colouring was more than ordinarily deep and rich. But the fact of its being a memorial window put in by my uncle, in memory of his deceased wife, invested it with a greater interest than it would have otherwise possessed for me; and Catty's proposal of a closer inspection was by no means unwelcome. On one of the lowest panes—too small to be distinguishable from a distance—were the Latin abbreviations, signifying that this window was in memory of Catherine Ainslee, and giving her age and date of death. These I set myself to make out; but my attention was soon distracted. Not by any of the various monuments to different members of the Ainslee family that I saw about me, but by a small side-window in the chancel. The corresponding one on the opposite side, which was all we could see from the Marling Hall pew, had plain glass; that in this, which I saw to-day for the first time, was stained. It was strangely different in character from the larger window. Here the most delicate tints took the place of the glowing colours of the other, and the single kneeling figure that occupied the centre—surpassed in beauty and grace of outline by no work of art I ever saw—contrasted widely with the almost grotesque grouping on the east window. Below was the inscription. 'In memoriam. E. B. A.' nothing more.

'How beautiful!' I exclaimed, under my breath. 'I don't think I ever genuinely admired a painted window before.'

'I am glad you like it. I do; but some won't look at it by the side of the east window. It was poor May's own choice.'

There was a hushed sadness in the voice that made it sound scarcely like Catty's.

'May? You won't mind my asking, Catty dear, but was she not one of the twins?'

'Yes; don't you remember them? Esther and May?'

'I remember them, but I had for-

gotten their names. Is that window in memory of Esther?'

'Yes. She died first. I think May had a presentiment then that she would not survive her long, and thought that the window opposite would soon be filled up for her.'

I glanced across at the clear glass of the window on the right-hand side of the chancel, and then back at Catty. She understood my look, and answered it.

'No, it never was done. Flo was so ill at the time, that they could not think of much else; and now they would not dare to do it on her account.'

'On Flora's account?'

'Yes. She has never got over May's death. Marian says any allusion to it might almost kill her, she thinks; so it is a forbidden subject at home. You may have wondered why we never spoke of her.'

'Was she so very fond of May?'

'Oh, yes. And then she has so little strength to fall back upon.'

'She looks terribly delicate,' I said—'more delicate than any one I ever saw before. But what are you afraid of for her? Is she consumptive? I never hear her cough.'

'I don't know. She was pretty strong as a child, I believe; but when she was about ten years old she had a great fright—a shock to her nerves, Marian calls it—and she has never been the same since. If you don't mind coming out in the porch, Hilda, where we can talk better, and can see the carriage directly it comes, I will tell you how it was.'

A shock to the nerves! Was it in any way connected with the report of the house being haunted? I wondered, as I followed her, and listened in anxious expectation for what was to follow.

'Marian does not like it being talked about,' said Catty, as we seated ourselves on the stone bench, 'independently of fear for Flora; for stories do get about so. But we are safe here from the least possibility of Flo's overhearing; and I am sure I may trust you, Hilda. Well, you know, I suppose, that Esther, one of the twins, died about nine years ago, a little after mamma. When she was

alive May and she were always together; but when she was gone, and poor May was left alone, by way, I suppose, of partly forgetting her sorrow, she took to petting Flo a great deal, and had her with her almost constantly as a companion, though she was so much younger—more than eight years. I don't remember very much of that time, except that Flo was excessively fond of her, she was so sweet and gentle in her ways, they say, and would rather be with her than any one else. When I was ten, and Flo eleven, our grandmother Ainslee came to see us. I dare say she was very good, really; but we children thought her dreadfully cross, and couldn't bear her. Flo was very much put out because she would not let her be often with May, and we were both very glad when we heard that she was going away; but Flo's joy was turned to sorrow when she heard that she was going to take May away with her on a visit. One evening, after we had come up from dessert, May followed us into the nursery. She came in crying, and kissed and fondled us both a good deal, especially Flora, who could hardly bear to be separated from her. We understood that she was saying "Good-bye;" but I don't think we quite realized that granny was going that very evening. She was one of those who always preferred travelling by night, I believe. Flo could not sleep for crying; and in the night, whether expecting to find May still in her room, or wishing to make sure that she really was gone, I don't know; but she got out of bed, and slipping on her dressing-gown, made her way along the passage that opens on the white staircase, intending to go up to the white room; for she wasn't a bit timid then, and used to go to May's room whenever she wanted anything. Nurse, who was asleep when she left the room, was presently wakened by a scream, and running out, found Flo lying in the passage in a fit. It was a long time before they could bring her round, and every one was very much frightened about her. When at last she recovered consciousness, she cried

out that a white lady was coming down the stairs, and was off again directly in another fit. For a long time they thought she would never get over them, and so far she never has; for when the fits passed away she was what you see her now—quite changed from what she used to be. But it was not only the fright that did it: the greatest sorrow that was possible for her, I think, came just at the same time. Early on the morning of the second day granny came back, and I knew at once, from the look in her face, that something dreadful had happened. I don't know how they ever managed to break to Flo the sad news she brought, which was that poor May had been taken very ill on the journey, and had died before she could get her home; but she cried out so for her, that they were obliged to tell her at last. It was no wonder that she got very much worse again after that. It almost broke her heart, I think. She does not seem to care for one of us now, comparatively.'

'How very, very sad!' I said, as Catty paused. 'But what do you really think about the cause of her fright?'

'One can't possibly tell. Flo was always rather imaginative, I think; and perhaps the moonlight fell through the passage window in such a way as to give her the idea. Our old nurse, who was very superstitious, shook her head, and said there was nothing to be wondered at, considering that it was that very night that poor Miss May died; and I think she infected the other servants with her fears, for all of them had a great dread of the white staircase after that time. As for the white room, none of them would go near it. Hilda, you saw it the evening you came. Everything is just as she left it that night. I am not nervous, as I told you then; but I don't feel as if I could bear to touch anything. It was in that dress that I saw her last.'

'Then, indeed, I don't wonder. But—Catty'—I could hardly bring out the words—'you say no one ever goes there now—not even cousin Marian, or my uncle?'

'Not any one but myself. Why should they? It is very seldom that I go. Hilda, how strange you look! Ah, there's the carriage. Now for a run! It's scarcely raining at all now.'

The church was too far off for us ever to go a second time on the Sunday, and this afternoon, being too wet for Catty and me to take our usual walk in the grounds, I took a book into the library after dinner and read. Flora was asleep on the sofa; my other cousins were not in the room. Finding myself at last growing sleepy over my book, for change of occupation I drew out from one of the lower bookshelves a very old-looking family Bible, which Catty had once pointed out to me as a great favourite with them as children, and began to turn over the leaves, and to look at the quaint illustrations that adorned them. I was thus employed when Marian entered, and seated herself with a book just opposite me, whence she had a good view of Flora's face—so white against the crimson cushions.

I came at last to the family register of names in the old Bible. Without much thought—certainly with no deliberate intention of making out my cousins' exact ages—I glanced down the page. Following the names of my uncle and aunt were those of my cousins in order of age, with the date of birth affixed to each. First there was Marian, born thirty-two years ago; then James Ayton, two years younger. After that came a name I was not familiar with, Agnes Jane. She had died, it appeared, in infancy. Next were the twins, bracketed—

{	Esther Beton and	}
{	Mary Isabel.	}

 How sad those two names looked! They recalled vividly to my mind Catty's narration in the morning, and I looked again to see in what year poor May had died. Then, for the first time, I noticed that there was no entry of death against her name. Had my aunt kept the list, and there been no one to continue it when she was gone? But no; her death and Esther's were entered in a clear, manly hand. Why should May's alone be omitted? Perhaps Flo's illness had been the original

cause of the neglect, and since then my uncle had either forgotten it, or dreaded a revival of the old grief. It seemed the most natural explanation. Raising my eyes from the page, I encountered Marian's glance—such a strange one! Her lips were tightly compressed, her nostrils expanded. She seemed striving to keep down the expression of some strong feeling.

'I beg your pardon!' I said, involuntarily; for I was sure that in some way I had displeased her; and when she came round to me, and closing the book with trembling hands, replaced it on the shelf, I felt terribly guilty, though I hardly knew why. Did she think that I was wishing to find out her age?—and would that possibly account for her evident annoyance?—or did she fear lest Flora, waking, should by chance come across that sister's name she so dreaded being brought before her? Marian sat down without a word, and I escaped as soon as possible to my room.

Christmas was fast approaching, and with it my cousin James's visit home. My uncle looked forward much to seeing him, evidently. It was the only subject on which I had heard him speak with animation. Marian, too, was quite eager about it. I could fancy what those two elder ones must be to each other, after death had made such a gap between them and the younger ones. Flo became rather more fluttered and nervous in manner than usual as the day drew near. She did not seem able to bear the least excitement. Catty was rather low-spirited just now. I could see that at this season she felt more than ever the separation from her favourite brother, Walter.

Cousin James was to return on the Thursday. On the Wednesday night, being somewhat wakeful, I heard for the second time that foot-step on the white stairs—so exactly the same!—evidently going up to the white room—ceasing at the same spot, it seemed, in the re-descent. The story of poor Flora's alarm eight years before, as told me by Catty in the church porch, did not tend to make me feel braver; and

though, as before, the sound did not return, I lay awake for many hours in a state of miserable trepidation.

My cousin came home the following day. In face he resembled his father more than any one else in the family; but he was much taller, and had a wider forehead, which gave him a more intellectual appearance. He was grave and quiet, but kind and courteous, nevertheless, and

very tender in his manner to his younger sisters. As soon as Catty was out of the room, he observed that she was looking dull, and I could see that all the evening he was exerting himself to cheer her, speaking about Walter, and the good accounts he had lately heard of him, in a way that showed he set down her low spirits to the same cause that I did.

(To be continued.)

ARTISTS' NOTES FROM CHOICE PICTURES.

'Choosing the Wedding Gown.'

BEAUTY, Plato somewhere proclaims, is the loveliest of all things,—and the rarest.

If by 'beauty' he meant that of Woman (I am afraid, however, he did not—exclusively), the reader, whether fair or bearded, will acknowledge the first to be a tolerably safe conclusion; but if we cast our eyes around us, as the orators so often advise us to do, how can we admit the second?

The truth is that the sage was dealing with one of those 'lofty generalizations' for which he had so special an aptitude. He no doubt was as familiar as you and I with female beauty—for the Greeks had pretty women before and after Phryne—but, as philosophers are wont, he was looking beyond, or through, the material shape into 'the soul of things.' So when writers tell us that the true painter is ever striving after an ideal beauty which he never quite attains, though he may haply come very near to it, they are no doubt dealing with abstract impalpable truths, rather than commonplace every-day actualities. But out of the region of cloudland, it has been seriously affirmed by writers on art that, in representing ordinary (or extraordinary) physical, flesh-and-blood, woman—

'The creature not too fair or good,
For human nature's daily food,'

every true painter has an ideal beauty, which he is always striving after, which he nearly reaches once,

but never again approaches—one beautiful face which he only once represents in its perfection. Now if this be so—I do not say it is, but if it be—then that we have here must be Mulready's ideal.

For the reader has seen at a glance that it is from Mulready this month's Notes are taken: and has seen, too, that the picture so annotated is that charming little scene from the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' the 'Choosing the Wedding Gown,' now, thanks to Mr. Sheepshanks, a part of the national treasures stored in the South Kensington Museum. It is twenty years ago that this picture was at the Academy Exhibition a constant source of surprise as well as delight. Mulready had then been for above forty years an exhibitor at the Academy, yet here was a painting by him, as fresh and unanticipated in conception and treatment as though the work of an unknown man. No symptom about it of mental torpor, of failing hand or eye, but full of life and spirit, as effective at a distance as when seen close, in colour of gem-like depth and lustre, and in execution the perfection of unobtrusive finish. And that fair face—truly one such as youthful poets dream of, but very, very rarely even youthful painters transfer to canvas. In the cold over-lighted room at South Kensington the picture loses something of its attractiveness among so many larger and more pretentious works; but, like Mrs. Primrose herself, it retains its hold on those who look 'not for

a fine glossy surface, but for such qualities as wear well.'

It has been objected, indeed, in a recent history of British art, that the face is not that of the Vicar's Deborah, for she, as the Vicar said, was 'a good-natured notable woman, who could read any English book without much spelling, and whom none could excel in pickling, preserving, and cookery,' whereas in the picture Mulready has made 'the Doctor looks like a modern high-church parson, and his wife [hardly wife yet, good sir] like a lady of fashion, rather than the comely maiden the Vicar describes as his early choice.'

But this does injustice alike to Goldsmith and Mulready—to the Vicar and to Deborah. I am afraid it would not be possible to defend Goldsmith from the charge of inconsistency in the management of the characters, any more than the plot, of his masterpiece. One and another little passage might be quoted that would seem quite out of keeping, with the ordinary conduct, benevolence, shrewdness, or simplicity of this or that personage. Like the people with whom you have to deal, in actual life, you find you must form your judgment of them from the general tenour of their sayings and doings month after month and year after year, rather than from any little single isolated phrase or action. There are, indeed, some wondrous wise folk who shake their heads and tell you that it is these little things that reveal the character. You don't believe them, perhaps; but when they quote the unpleasant little phrase, or what you fancied thoughtless little act, as an indication of the true disposition of your friend or *fiancée*, you are, if neither puzzled nor perverted, made momentarily uncomfortable. If it be an acquaintance you have not seen for some time but still think well of, about whom you are supplied with one of these 'little facts,' you have in addition to the discomfort a sense of perplexity.

Now the sentence given above as quoted from Goldsmith is just one of these cases. It does not somehow

exactly correspond to one's recollections and impressions of Mrs. Primrose; nor does the ring of it altogether recal the Vicar's pleasant prattle. We are all unfaithful, as Thackeray was constantly reminding us, to our youthful flames. We all neglect, says another sage, the great writers whom we profess to worship, and once, perhaps, did. Homer, after college days, is read about rather than read. Shakespeare is left undisturbed on our shelves. For us, mute inglorious Milton there may rest. Even the inimitable 'Vicar' is disregarded whilst we hold converse with a 'Mutual Friend,' or listen to the stern resolves of 'Felix Holt.' No doubt all this is but too true; but if we neglect our great writers we retain our old reverence for them: and so the reading of that extract from the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' rather, I confess, raised my bile—seeing that, with a view to the pages of 'London Society,' I had been thinking somewhat seriously about Deborah's lovely face as mirrored on Mulready's canvas.

But on turning to Goldsmith's pages I was relieved. The Vicar's description of his Deborah is not exactly as it stands in the pretended extract. He says all that is there, but not quite in the same manner. And there is an important omission. 'I had scarcely taken orders a year,' he writes, 'before I began to think seriously of matrimony, and chose my wife, as she did her wedding gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but for such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured notable woman; and as for breeding there were few country ladies who could show more. She could read any English book without much spelling; but for pickling, preserving, and cookery, none could excel her.' Now this certainly is a very different version, though it reads much like the other. But you see, though she was not 'a lady of fashion,' any more than the Vicar was 'like a modern high-church parson,' she was a young lady of as good breeding as almost any lady of the county, and possessed all the accomplishments then thought essential to a well-born and well-

educated country lady. Mulready was right then in making her a lady, and his critic utterly and hopelessly wrong in his notion of her as a 'comely maiden' of 'quaint simplicity.'

Was Mulready, however, right in representing her as so charming in face as well as lady-like in bearing? I think so. Remember that the Vicar's description of his Deborah was written not when she first—

'Held his young brain captived in golden cage,'

but after they had lived to grow old together (but recollect, 'loving each other tenderly, and our fondness increasing as we grew old'), and seen their children men and women, and three of them, after many adventures, married; when, instead of penning fine phrases about his Deborah's beauty, he very naturally indulges in a little good-natured raillery about her small learning and love of romances, her pickling and preserving, and excellent contrivances in housekeeping, on which 'she prided herself;' though, as he maliciously adds, he 'could never find that they grew the richer for all her contrivances.' But there are many little scattered indications in the novel which show she was considered a beauty. In the famous historical family piece, for instance, was not Mrs. Primrose represented as Venus?—a Venus like the Deborah of our picture, by the way, fond of dressing in a handsome style, 'the painter being requested not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her stomacher and hair.' Again, her daughters were like their mother, and one of them, the Vicar tells us, 'had that luxuriance of beauty with which painters generally draw Hebe — open, sprightly, and commanding;' whilst the other's features, though 'not so striking at first, often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring.' Yes, there can be no doubt that Goldsmith meant his Deborah to be a lovely young lady, dowered as well with beauty as with 'such qualities as would wear well.' And Mulready did, right when he thus

painted the bride as a sweet, simple-hearted, tender, trustful being — willing to be the true wife and helpmeet of a plain, good man, and to bear without repining the sorrows as well as the blessings of her lot — one eminently endowed not only with beauty, but also, in abundance, with the homely qualities which the Vicar sought for in his wife: the true Deborah of our old imagination: the Deborah that Goldsmith drew: not the quaint and comely maiden of our critic's rustic imagination.

Having done this piece of literary justice we may recur for a moment to the picture. The scene is the inside of a country draper's shop. The draper we see is a man well to do, and one who can afford to keep a good article. Deborah, Mrs. Primrose that is to be, is choosing for her wedding gown a peach-blossom silk, and is carefully scrutinizing its wearing qualities. She has already selected the hangings for the famous green bed, a pretty set of window-curtains, and other household as well as wedding requisites — the sprig of orange-blossom laid on the pile typifying at once the purchase and the occasion. She has been long selecting, for the wedding gown is not the only article that she chooses for such qualities as would wear well, and her little spaniel has curled himself round at her feet and gone comfortably to sleep. The young Vicar, however, is heedless of the flight of time, for he finds ample occupation in watching the countenance of his charmer. And no wonder. 'Cold must be he who ever gazed impassive on her beauty.' That comfortable-looking old mercer, who ordinarily thinks far more of the beauty of his silks than he does of that of his customers, is evidently touched by the loveliness of our Deborah. See with what a gentle admiring deference he is regarding her, whilst insisting on the excellent texture and colour of the silk she is holding up to the light.

It is, as has been said before, Mulready's one ideal face. He had been long trying to produce it without success. Some painters never succeed. Take the first half-dozen

names that occur, and recal, if you can, to your memory half a dozen really beautiful faces produced by them. The earliest of the Deborah type of beauty that Mulready painted was the young lass listening to her lover in 'First Love,' painted in 1839. It was a failure; but in 'Burchell and Sophia Hay-making,' painted for Mr. Baring in 1842, he made a more successful effort. The daughter's features, however, though 'soft, modest, and alluring,' as those of the actual Sophia, were wanting in the complete and perfected beauty of those of her mother. Mulready tried hard to repeat this or an equally beautiful face, but he never in any measure succeeded. The 'First Love' is at the South Kensington Museum (No. 141), close by the 'Wedding Gown' (which is No. 145), and near this, again, is one of his latest trials at a beautiful face, No. 236, a 'Mother teaching her Son.' Next time you are at the South Kensington Museum, gentle reader, compare these three faces, and notice the marvellous superiority of our Deborah's.

And, fair reader, next time you go there do you notice the additional charm that may be given to a lovely face by a really skilful, and not merely a fashionable, adaptation of forms and colour in dress. Sir Thomas Lawrence used to tell his fair sitters that he never found occasion to alter the arrangement of the colours in a lady's dress and adornings; 'for ladies,' he would add, with his finest bow, 'ladies have an intuitive perception of harmonious colour.' But the President was a courtly painter, a gallant gentleman, and—a sad flatterer; and so as soon as he had made his pretty little speech, and the fair one had departed, he would straightway proceed to change or modify the feminine harmony of colours as much as suited his purpose. Yet with all his skill, and the intuitive perception of his sitters, he never was able to set off a transparent pearly skin, blonde hair, and clear blue eye, as happily as Deborah has hers by means of that deep crimson velvet lining of her hat and the piquant arrangement of the dainty white

feather. And then the jacket and the dress—well, we feel that we are on dangerous ground, treading, as the French orator always vows, on a volcano; but with certain dolorous recollections of the 'fashionable' shapes and colours in the hats and garments worn by all ages and conditions of marriageable young ladies during one or two past summer seasons, we really could not resist the occasion of recommending our Deborah and her adornings to the grave consideration of the fair young students of 'London Society.'

But this picture will furnish a valuable lesson to *all* young students. How, it may fairly be asked, did Mulready, a man of sixty, succeed in producing so original a picture, and, for the first time, so lovely a face? The answer is obvious to any one who knew the man, or is acquainted with his history. He was always a student, always a learner. In his early pictures, whilst his drawing is invariably careful, it is often inaccurate. But he went on year after year drawing with unflagging diligence, and ever-increasing power, till he became not only, as Sir Charles Eastlake told the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the present state of the Royal Academy (1863), 'the best and most judicious teacher the Academy has ever had,' and 'the best judge of the merits of drawing in this country;' but himself, so skilled in drawing, that as Charles Landseer declared, 'perhaps neither is there now, nor at any time has there been, so great a draughtsman as Mr. Mulready.' Most academicians, when they are elected visitors, cease to draw in the schools, contenting themselves with acting as teachers; but Mulready continued to draw as diligently as the most ambitious of his pupils. 'An admirable example for students,' said Sir Edwin Landseer; 'his drawings are remarkable for their accuracy; everything seems to be done upon oath by him; he can account for every touch, and he is a good anatomist.' Whilst as a crowning testimony, we have his own statement of his practice from 1817, when he first acted as visitor, to 1863, when

he gave his evidence: 'I have from the first moment I became a visitor in the life school drawn there *as if I were drawing for a prize.*' Surely here is a lesson the student, whatever be his pursuit, may profitably ponder. This thoroughness of study, it is almost needless to add, was not confined to drawing, but extended to all the technicalities of painting, as well as to the principles of art.

You see how this continuous training of hand and eye would give ever-increasing accuracy in drawing and clearness of perception, but perhaps hardly how it would lead to the invention of so rare and original a type of beauty as that we have been examining. Of course we must assume, in any case, that there exists in the mind of the painter that native sentiment or feeling for the beautiful, that something we call genius, which will enable him to call up before his own mental

vision the form he feels to be most suitable for his purpose. Raffaele, in his famous letter, told how he had been trying to find a model that would in some measure embody the idea he had formed in his mind. He was hopeless, he said in effect, of meeting with one sufficiently beautiful, but he would strive to supply the deficiencies of his model from the idea he had thus conceived. And ~~this seems to have been the method~~ Mulready—whether consciously or not—pursued. He ~~was~~ always seeking to attain ~~greater accuracy of drawing and a finer notion of beauty.~~ 'You can hardly look too much to nature,' was his ~~deliberate and confirmed opinion,~~ expressed only three or four months before his death; 'but there is now too great an ~~indifference to beauty.~~' He never felt that indifference, and his earnestness met with its fitting reward.

UP AND DOWN THE LONDON STREETS.

BY MARK LEMON.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Shakspeare Tavern, when the Lion's Head was removed from Button's, must not be passed by, as it was the first tavern opened in Covent Garden, and Tomkins, its proprietor, had never less than 100 pipes of wine in his cellar. He kept seven waiters, all neatly dressed, with ruffles, and died worth 40,000*l.*

Honest Jack Stacie, his apprentice, kept the Bedford Coffee House when Henry Fielding, Hogarth, Churchill, Goldsmith, and others had their gossiping shilling rubber club. Fielding was a very merry fellow, but Churchill and Hogarth quarrelled with each other. Here the celebrated Beefsteak Club, founded by Lambert, Rich's scene-painter, in the scene room of the theatre, was held, after migrating to the Shakspeare and back again to the theatre. Among the members of the Steaks were some of the most distinguished noblemen and gentlemen of their time. Steaks,

fried onions, and port wine constituted the bill of fare, and the first toast was, 'Success to the Ten Acres' on which Covent Garden stands, completely surrounded by St. Martin's parish.

Addison, after a time, patronized Button, formerly a servant to the Countess of Warwick. And his coffee-house continued in vogue until Addison's death and Steele's retirement into Wales. The literature of the time, as you are aware, abounds with allusions to Button's. Steele, Budgell, Phillips, Carey, Davenant, and Colonel Brett were Addison's chief companions at Button's. He usually studied all the morning, dined at Button's, and stayed there five or six hours, and sometimes far into the night. Pope was of the company for about a year, but it hurt his health, and so he quitted it. It is possible that a rod, which Ambrose Phillips hung up at the bar for Pope's especial

comfort, might have had something to do with the retirement of the satirist.

Here you remember the *Guardian* had his Lion's Head in imitation of its Venetian prototype. This Leonine letter-box was removed to the

assembled their adherents. Many violent encounters ensued, until an Act of Parliament put an end to the city strife and these political Muggletonians.

Partridge, the almanack-maker, whom Swift killed and buried many years before his death, and Mrs. Clive, the favourite Nell (in 'The Devil to Pay') of her day, lived in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, when Tavistock Street was the fashionable emporium for millinery; and here Lord Sandwich first met Miss Ray, whom Parson Hackman shot from the window of the Bedford Hotel. At the White Peruke, in Maiden Lane, lived Voltaire; and Turner, the painter, was born in the same locality.

Covent Garden, 'for cabbages and comedians famed in story,' and its adjacent coffee-houses, are so intimately associated with the theatres, that we will very briefly recal some of the records of these popular places of amusement. The first playhouse erected purposely for scenic representation was called the Theatre in Holywell Lane, Shore-ditch, built by John Brayna, the father-in-law of Burbidge, the actor, and by trade a joiner. Paris Gardens existed still earlier—in 1560—for bull and bear-baiting only; and there plays were also performed subsequently. The Globe, Hope, Rose, Blackfriars, Whitefriars, and other theatres have been already spoken of. The Cockpit, or Phoenix Theatre, occupied the site of Pitt Place, in Drury Lane, and was twice nearly destroyed by the London apprentices, and pulled down in 1649 by sectarian soldiers.

When the stage revived, after the Restoration, the king, however, patronising only two theatres—the King's and the Duke's—little attention was paid to correctness of costume, but the dresses were magnificent and costly—mostly left-off suits of royalty and the nobility; and these continued to be presented to the theatres as late as George II. The scenery improved, and some attempt was made to realize the incidents described, as in before time Desdemona had been frequently smothered on a deal table, and the gorgeous

LETTER-BOX AT BUTTON'S COFFEE-HOUSE.
(Designed by Hogarth.)

Shakspeare Tavern under the Piazza, then to the Bedford Hotel, then sold by Mr. Robins to Mr. Richardson, who had Evans's Hotel. The Head is now preserved at the Duke of Bedford's, at Woburn.

Long Acre was formerly called the Elma. Here Captain Oliver Cromwell resided in a fair House in 1643, and John Dryden, in a house on the north side, facing Rose Alley. In a shoemaker's shop Richard Wilson's early landscapes were exhibited for sale, and Thomas Stothard, the painter, was born here. Defoe describes a celebrated Mug House, where persons met for vocal harmony—a harp playing at one end of the room. Ale only was drunk out of mugs, each toper chalking his score on the table. On King George's ascension the friends of the Protestant cause, to oppose the Tory mobs, opened Mug Houses in various parts of London, and where they

Henry VIII. listened to Catherine's appeal when seated in great state on a three-legged stool. The only female sovereign who had visited a public theatre was Henrietta Maria, until Charles II.'s time, as the plays of Shakspeare—

'Which so did take Eliza and our James'—

were always played in the halls, banqueting houses, or cockpits, attached to the Court. Charles made the theatre the fashion, and the queen and ladies of the Court attended, generally wearing masks. For

'The wits of Charles found easier way to fame,
Nor wished for Jonson's art nor Shakspeare's
flame;
Themselves they studied, and as they felt
they writ—
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit.'

Women's parts had hitherto been played only by men—Kynaston was very celebrated—but actresses now appeared upon the stage, and many have become closely associated with the licentious history of the time. The first female actress was said to have been a Mrs. Saunderson, who belonged to Davenant's company, and performed the part of Ianthe in the 'Siege of Rhodes.' Malone, however, disputes this lady's questionable distinction. The play began at three, and so allowed a visit to the Mulberry Garden or Vauxhall after. The prices were somewhat less than at present; and servants in livery were admitted free to the upper gallery after the fifth act had commenced. The orange girls were an impudent set, who stood in the pit with their backs to the stage, and chatted with the beaux, who paid, like Mr. Pepys, 6*d.* apiece for their oranges. Their mistress, or superior, was called Orange Moll, and found a capital representative in Mr. Keeley, when the writer's late most valued friend, Douglas Jerrold, produced his 'Nell Gwynn.' The ladies in the pit wore vizards or masks; and Mr. and Mrs. Pepys long affected the middle gallery, price eighteenpence.

It was customary (we quote Ryan's 'Dramatic Table Talk') to admit that class of spectators who frequented the boxes on to the stage, and to accommodate them with

stools, for the use of which they paid sixpence or a shilling, according to circumstances. It would seem, however, that this absurd custom was confined to the smaller houses, or private theatres, as they were termed, where the company was less numerous and more select. Here the fastidious critic, the wit, ambitious of distinction, and the gallant, studious of the display of his apparel or of his person, were to be seen seated upon stools, or reclining upon the rushes with which the stage was strewn, and regaling themselves with pipes of tobacco, supplied either by their own pages or by the boys of the house. Amidst such 'most admired confusion' and indecency were the dramatic works of Shakspeare and his contemporaries produced, works which we,

'With all appliances and means to boot,'

with everything that can promote the reality of the scene, have never seen equalled, and very seldom, indeed, approached. The following quotation, from the introduction to 'Cynthia's Revels,' is quite in point:

And here, I enter.

1st CHILD. What! upon the stage, too?

2nd CHILD. Yes: and I step forth like one of the children, and ask you, Would you have a stool, sir?

3rd CHILD. A stool, boy!

2nd CHILD. Ay, sir; if you give me sixpence, I'll find you one.

3rd CHILD. For what, I pray thee? What shall I do with it?

2nd CHILD. O lord, sir! will you betray your ignorance so much? Why, *throne yourself in state upon the stage, as other gentlemen use, sir.*

Seated, then, at their ease, they laughed, talked, and cracked jokes with each other during the performance, and had, as Decker says, 'a signed patent, to engross the whole commodity of censure; may lawfully presume to be a guider, and stand at the helm, to steer the passage of the scenes.' The style and manner of the criticisms which they vented between the whiffs of their pipes are admirably ridiculed by Jonson.

'Now, sir, suppose that I am one of your genteel auditors that am come in, having paid my money at the door, with much ado; and here I take my place and sit down. I

have my three sorts of tobacco in my pocket, my light by me, and thus I begin (*at the breaks he takes his tobacco*). By this light! I wonder that any man is so mad to come to see these rascally tits play; here they do act like so many wrens or pismires; not the fifth part of a good face amongst them. And then their music is abominable; able to stretch a man's ears worse than ten pillories; and then their ditties—most lamentable things, like the pitiful fellows that make them. Poets! By this vapour, an 'twere not for tobacco, I think the very stench of them would poison me—I should not dare to come in at their gates. A man were better visit fifteen jails, or a dozen or two of hospitals, than once venture to come near them.' The disgust which so ridiculous and absurd a custom could not fail to excite in the audience, at length, however, banished it from the theatres, although an attempt was made, in comparatively modern times, to revive it, in favour of the Duchess of Queensbury, at the performance of the 'Village Opera' at Drury Lane, in 1729. The ill success of this experiment was very elegantly alluded to by a wit of the day, in the following lines:

'Bent on dire work, and kindly rude, the town,
Impatient, blessed thy seat, dear duchess, down,
Conscious, that there had thy soft form appeared,
Lost all in gaze, no vacant ear had heard.
Thy lambent eyes had looked their rage away,
And the relenting hiss, and sav'd the play.
Thus not in clouds (as father Homer sung),
Such as fair Venus round Æneas flung,
Had our dull bard escap'd the dreadful fright,
But sunk, concealed, in an excess of light!'

At the Cockpit the first printed play, 'Shirley's Wedding,' was performed (1629). The Duke's Theatre and Opera was originally a tennis-court, and opened with Davenant's 'Siege of Rhodes,' and there Rich first introduced pantomimes, playing Harlequin himself. Quin played there, and from a fracas in which he was embroiled behind the scenes originated the sergeant's guard at the theatres royal. Gay's 'Beggar's Opera,' produced there, ran sixty-two nights the first season, the original Polly Peachum afterwards be-

coming Duchess of Bolton. In 1842, during some alterations, the old stage-doors were discovered, and over them two busts, one supposed to have been Ben Jonson (unfortunately destroyed) and the other Shakspeare, presented to the Garrick Club by the late Duke of Devonshire, and now associated with the best collection of theatrical pictures in England. The College of Surgeons occupies the site of the Duke's Theatre—very appropriately, as no doubt much mangling of poets had been done at the Duke's.

The first Covent Garden Theatre was on the site of the old convent, and the second, of which Rich became manager, was opened in 1732. Garrick played there, having first appeared at Goodman's Fields, and drawn all London—horn mad, Walpole says—to that remote region. In 1808 the theatre was destroyed by fire, and rebuilt by Smirke, the first stone being laid by the Prince of Wales. In 1809 it opened with new prices, which caused the notorious O. P., or Old Price row, and which continued for seventy-seven nights, during which time scarcely a word that was uttered on the stage was heard for the rioting of the incensed audience. The manager had to surrender at discretion; and eight years after John Kemble took his farewell of the stage, as did his brother Charles in 1840; and here Edmund Kean acted for the last time in 1833. With what wonderful actors is Covent Garden Theatre associated in our memory, when the play was indeed 'the thing.' This theatre was destroyed by fire in 1856, at the conclusion of a masquerade, one of the last, we hope, in England.

The first Drury Lane Theatre was built on the site of the present one for Thomas Killigrew, the company being called the King's servants; and here Nell Gwynn first appeared. The King's House was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren for Killigrew, Hart, Mohun, and (according to Mr. Collier) Dryden. Dryden wrote the opening prologue and epilogue; and when Garrick took the theatre, Dr. Johnson wrote the prologue; and there

Garriek, the greatest actor perhaps that ever played, took leave of the stage. Richard Brinsley Sheridan then became part proprietor, and John Kemble stage-manager. The theatre was taken down and another erected, called by Mrs. Siddons 'The Wilderness,' as it was capable of holding from 4000 to 5000 persons. It was destroyed by fire in 1809, and rebuilt, Lord Byron writing the prologue for the opening night. James and Horace Smith's 'Rejected Addresses,' in imitation of the poets of the day, had their origin in the committee's advertisement for 'an occasional prologue,' that is, a prologue for the occasion. There was an iron curtain at Drury Lane, which, in case of need, was to be

let down, so, as the prologue stated,

'So, to assure their generous benefactors,
They'd only burn the scenery and the actors.'

There was also a water-tank, by which the managers undertook

'To drown the audience in a minute.'

So it was out of the frying-pan into the water-butt.

We have necessarily passed over many subjects of considerable interest, but we only professed to tell you as much of old Westminster as could be told in a day's ramble; and now that we must part company, we are no worse friends, let us hope, than when we made acquaintance in the preface.

THE END.

SLAIN BY A FAN.

A Soldier's Story.

IN TWO PARTS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'RUTH BAYNARD'S STORY.'

THE feather fan was not exactly what we should call a fan in these days. It was more like a fire-screen, perhaps; for it was large and light, and made by a double row of short white ostrich feathers being stuck round half a circle of wood japanned and gilded, about three inches in diameter, and having a rather long handle. Through a hole bored in the end of this handle, a cord of gold threads and black silk passed, and this cord was fastened together by a wonderfully beautiful tassel, into which seed pearls were looped, and little stars of gold. To prevent the feathers getting out of shape and disengaged at their ends, a very thin wire, covered with white silk, was passed between them two inches perhaps from the outer circle, and to this wire the feathers were fastened, back to back, by a little device of seed pearls on one side and a gold star on the other—such was the fan. And such a fan Isabella of Spain, the wife of the Archduke Albert, held in her hand when she visited Rubens in his studio at Antwerp, if

we may trust—and we certainly may—to history written with a painter's colours, and given to the world by the engraver's tool; such a fan belonged to women who wore ruffs like Queen Elizabeth, with modifications; and long, stiff-stomached gowns, and velvet cloaks with stiff edgings. They, too, had puffs of fair satin and lace round their delicate wrists, and hair turned off their foreheads and kept safe in a velvet cap, which gave a happy excuse for banding their heads with gold, and such other precious things as they had power to command.

And after these things passed away, and Vandyke had told the world how point lace could show off face and neck in man and woman by lying flat, and turning over on the dress of cloth or velvet, still the feather fan was used, such as I have described to you, and such as I am going to write about. It was a fan to attract any one's attention, even the attention of a non-fan-flirting animal, even of a man like myself. I exclaimed when I saw it, 'What a fan!'

'Yes,' said a sweetly grave and rather more than middle-aged lady, speaking without looking up from a manuscript which she was unrolling, all lines, and names, and figures; 'yes'—giving a glance from her soft brown eyes over her spectacles—'it is the fan you see in the picture.'

'What picture?'

'Don't you know? The picture over the couch—Dame Jenifer. She was as odd as her namesake.'

Her namesake, as all the world ought to know, was no other than Guinever, the beautiful and maligned wife of King Arthur. It is a west-country name; living there, and nowhere else I believe, like Digory for D'Egaré, that Knight of the Round Table. So fare the mighty, even in their names.

Though the lady in the spectacles was my own mother, and though I had every cause and inclination to be loving and reverential, I certainly had a great wish to do battle for the injured memory of the great hero's queen; but there lay the fan—that and the long roll of manuscript the only things on the table—there lay the fan, and it was the original of the fan in the picture, the fan that Dame Jenifer held.

It became suddenly an object of immense interest to me. We say sometimes when we take up any ancient piece of finery, preserved from past times, that we wonder who wore—who used—who bought, and who treasured it? But in the case of this fan, looking so fair and light—this beautiful bauble all gold and pearls—I *knew* who had used it; and turning my eyes to the picture, I saw her there.

'Dame Jenifer'—always when I say these words they seem to describe to my ear a very stiff sort of stuck-up personage, bristling with self-importance, tenacious of power, persecuting in temper, and of evil prophecy as to what the lives of the young around her would turn out. But when I then looked at Dame Jenifer, the eye corrected the ear. A girl of seventeen perhaps, sat on a sofa in a costume resembling that of 'Rubens' wife.' The *chapeau de*

paille, with its long drooping feather, threw a shadow half way down her face, for her head was bent, till her dimpled chin rested on the jewel that fastened her green velvet dress round her throat; she held the fan in her hand in such a manner that she looked as if she beckoned you to her in a sly, half-secret way; and the eyes that looked out from under the long eyelashes were full of girlish roguery, and an inextinguishable mirth.

'I did not know that *that* was Dame Jenifer,' I said in a hurry. 'I thought the stiff old lady in the white muslin apron and open black silk dress was Jenifer—the picture on the staircase I mean.'

'My dear boy, you will never learn their names. And yet I knew names and histories before I was your age.'

'But then you had always lived here, and I am only just come.'

So I persuaded my mother, who was a born antiquary, to put away the long manuscript and sit round towards the fire—it was raining piteously—and tell me all she knew of Dame Jenifer. While she is making the necessary introductory remarks, I must have some further little explanation with the reader about myself.

I was the eldest of three children, and I was twenty-five years of age. Urgent family affairs, and health rather the worse for wear under the new conditions of an Indian atmosphere, had brought me home, after a seven years' absence from England. My father was dead, and my mother had very unexpectedly become the possessor of an old property of considerable value. Her only brother, many years younger than herself, had left it to her unconditionally and unencumbered. She had two other sons, and I was to arrange with her to divide my father's property between them, and, taking her maiden name of Heniker, become heir to the old estate myself.

Up to this time we had always lived in London. I had never seen Heniker till now, though I had heard of it often enough, my mother having loved her old home with a

remarkably strong affection: and now, as I have already explained, I was suddenly and deeply interested in my mother's ancestress Dame Jenifer, the owner of the feather fan.

'Her name was Jenifer Obin, my dear boy,' my mother began, taking off her spectacles and producing her knitting from a long little India box which I had brought back to her. 'Jenifer Obin's father was a Royalist, as all the best gentry of good old Cornwall were, and he died at the battle of Broad Oak Down. My ancestor Peter Heniker was there. He was of this county, as you know, and lived here. But he and Jenifer's father had been dear friends, and they had promised each other that if either died in the wars of that day the other should take the child that should so be left fatherless, and, bringing the orphan up with their own, arrange a marriage between the two. So, by some means or other, when Sir Peter Heniker heard of Captain Obin's death he sent for Jenifer.

'The child was ten years old. When she came she said she had pledged her word to take care of a girl called Kate Cradock, if their fathers died in battle. The double deaths had occurred, and Jenifer clamoured for Kate. Sir Peter was not a man to do any good deed in an imperfect manner, so Kate, too, was brought to this house as Jenifer's friend and companion.

'Sir Peter was a man of about forty years of age, a widower with a son of fourteen. To this son he stood pledged to give Jenifer in marriage, and the children knowing of the arrangement made no objection.

'Young Heniker, however, when Jenifer was nearly fifteen, was killed by an accident, and Jenifer and Sir Peter lamented together, and consoled each other. The next male heir to this place—it was not entailed—was Sir Peter's nephew, the son of a younger brother who had married very early in life, and was settled in trade in a neighbouring seaport. This boy was Jaspar Heniker, and Sir Peter said that he

was now to inherit the place and to marry the young lady.

'When Jenifer was sixteen, Kate Cradock being a year older, the discovery was made by Miss Obin that Jaspar and Kate Cradock had been making love before young Peter Heniker's death.

'She was furiously angry. Not angry with Jaspar for loving Kate—that, she confessed in many of her letters to Kate herself which have been preserved, was natural enough, for they had received an equal amount of education, and Kate was very fair, and very good. But what Jenifer hated so heartily was the willingness of Jaspar to give up Kate, and marry another without loving her, just to secure to himself the place of his uncle's heir.'

'Quite right!' I exclaimed. 'And I beg Jenifer's pardon for having confused her with the stiff old lady on the stairs.'

'Take care!' said my mother, smiling.

I looked towards the picture. The fire played on the face and made it look absolutely alive, and then the flame died out and left the figure indistinct; but I had suddenly received the impression that one day I should see Dame Jenifer and speak to her. The notion was absurd and utterly unreasonable, but nevertheless it had given me the very oddest thrill I had ever suffered.

'Why am I to "take care?"' I asked; and I fancied my voice had changed a little. But my mother only poked the fire once more into a blaze, and said—

'Dame Jenifer's has been the strange story of the family. I only meant to say, take care how you praise her before you hear the end.'

So saying, she went on with Dame Jenifer's story.

'Terribly angry she was with Jaspar; and all the more because the love between her and Kate Cradock was as true as ever; and Kate was suffering bravely and secretly, and trying to make the sacrifice so generously as not to betray the whole truth. But the whole truth was known to Jenifer, somehow, and yet she allowed the day for her marriage to be fixed, and

let Sir Peter make all the wedding preparations. They were to be married here, in the hall, which was then a sort of banqueting-room; and they stood, so the story says, on the dais—that raised floor just under the musicians' gallery.

'But the night before she had had a great explanation with Kate Craddock—that night she had seen his last letter to the deserted girl, in which his love was declared in the strongest terms, and his marriage with herself was spoken of as the hard necessity that grew out of Sir Peter's promise to his friend, her father; and he wrote that the estate would go to Jenifer's husband, whoever he might be.

'And so, somehow, a strange thing was arranged. The bridal party stood in their places about ten at night. The bride veiled—the bridesmaids veiled—they were three in number, and Jenifer had arranged their toilettes. But when Jaspar uncovered his wife's face to give her the kiss that was usual in those days, he found that he had married Kate Craddock; and Jenifer, flinging back her own veil, congratulated him with all a girl's revengeful satisfaction and force.

'But it was Sir Peter who was most astonished. "Jenifer!" he exclaimed, "you have done yourself a cruel wrong, perhaps. I promised your dead father that you should be mistress of Heniker. I have lost my son, and you have cast my nephew from you; Madam, there remains only myself!"

'And so, taking the girl's hand, and drawing a ring from his own finger, he led her, speechless, to the spot the married people had left, and, with a stern voice, commanded the clergyman to begin again. After a pause of a moment, to allow the girl to speak if she would, the service was once more said.

'When Sir Peter had to speak, his voice was so solemn and so respectful—so full of manly loving and of gentle promise, that all of the many listeners were struck by the eloquence of its tones. They said that Jenifer looked up at him wonderingly, as he bowed his tall form towards her, and uttered the I WILL;

that their eyes met once, and that in that single glance he had conquered, and she was won. Her voice answered him with a pathos and a meaning it had never had before,—and she was mistress of Heniker, and his word was redeemed.'

'Mother,' I exclaimed, 'I like our ancestress better than ever. I hope they were happy.'

'Oh, yes,' said my mother, carelessly: 'they were very happy, and had a fine son who was one of my grandfathers. But there is rather an ugly story of Jaspar's anger when this son was born, and some ill-tempered wishes, which were to vex all Henikers till something impossible happened—I can't tell what.'

'And this is her fan?' I again took up the feather fan.

'Yes; Sir Peter was proud of his girl-wife, and had her picture taken; and she is looking full of youthful malice at the double success of her daring trick—is not she?'

'She is very handsome: and I am sure I must have seen some one so like her.'

My mother's face was a wonder to look at when I said this. Her 'Where?' had a strange anxiety in it; and when I said, 'In my dreams, I suppose,' she laughed, half sadly, and turned away.

I had not been more than a week with my mother at Heniker, and I had not been in England more than a fortnight. We had lived always in London, in a good house in a pleasant situation. To this house my father had taken my dear mother when she first left Heniker to be his bride, and there all her children had been born.

To be the possessor of Heniker had never crossed my imagination. I had never thought of my uncle as a man likely to die, or even to live unmarried; and so, when, on reaching London, I found my mother's letter desiring me to join her in her own old home, I obeyed, with an odd feeling of change upon me, to which it was not quite pleasant to feel that I had to grow accustomed. It was not the welcome I had expected.

I was young enough to expect

and to picture; to desire, and even to crave after the old home, and the sweet, soft-voiced, tender-eyed mother, who had always made a darling of her first-born. I would rather have met her in the home I knew. And Heniker I felt to be something of an intrusion into my life, though it made her rich, and endowed me with expectations. It took all the first week to reconcile me to the obliteration of my picture, and to make me look my fortune in the face in a friendly manner. But about the seventh day I shook hands with Fate, and acknowledged her bounties. My mother, on my arm, wandered among wood and lawn, and all the hitherto untold history of her girl-life dropped out. I knew the spot where she had first seen my father from her casement in the gable; I walked with her under the lime-trees where she used to read his letters, and wait for his coming. The fascination of a companionship more close than we had ever before enjoyed endeared the place to me, and made me, what I was shortly to call myself—a Heniker; a Heniker in heart as well as in name.

But now lawyers and friends agreed that we might go back to London. It was desirable to do so; for Frank was coming from Oxford, and Fred from Eton, and I had not seen them yet. So we packed up sundry small treasures which were to travel with us, and sat down to spend almost our last evening in the room where the picture hung of the lady with the feather fan. As was natural, we talked again of Dame Jenifer's story; but I saw my mother shrink a little from the subject. And again and again, by the glinting firelight, as we sat gossiping, I caught the strange, life-like smile of the laughing face, till I grew friendly with its beauty, and was almost cheated into thinking that the real fan, and not its picture, was beckoning to me from a living hand. I think this evening will always remain in my memory with a strange sensation of mystery about it. But in the morning came a letter, which made my mother determine to prolong her stay at Heniker; and I was too happy in

our close reunion, after a seven years' separation, to wish to leave her. So the thought of last evenings passed away, and the second part of our visit began.

PART THE SECOND.

I felt, at first, sorry to stay longer at Heniker. I will honestly confess that there was something distinctly uncomfortable in the picture of the lady and her feather fan. There, on a table in a corner of the room, lay the fan that Dame Jenifer had really held, but the whole room seemed to be inhabited by the picture of it and the fair holder. I felt her smile when I could not see it; and I am candid enough to declare that I looked round again and again when seated with my back to this haunting picture, as if to make sure that the fan was still in the place where the painter had placed it. Dame Jenifer's eyes were always laughing at me, always following me with that quizzing expression which few men are heroic enough not to mind, and, perhaps, are no greater for such heroism even if they may have attained to it.

I grew romantic sometimes, and fanciful under the influence of that fan held out in constant beckoning to me. 'I'll go up to her boldly, and ask her what she wants, one day.' Then I corrected myself of this vaunting humour, and said, with an inward laugh, 'On my life I believe she would answer me!' But all the while—in some not-to-be-explained manner—I felt falling in love with my ancestress, and thinking of old Sir Peter as very lucky in having suddenly become possessed of a treasure so rare as this lady with her feather fan. Then I would take up the real fan, and consider its beauties, and I was once even foolish enough to shake the pretty thing at the pictured owner, and defy her, with all the airs of superior power which life and health and the possession of Heniker conferred. But I stopped short in my silliness. 'Frightfully disrespectful!' I muttered. 'After all, she is one of my grandmothers, and deserves my thanks, and she can only laugh at

me now. But—but if this fan has not something to do with my destiny, I'll never more listen to one word in favour of presentiments.'

The cold spring had suddenly left us. Our visit to Heniker had begun with gloom and the friendly consolations of great fires; but now, suddenly, spring had cast aside her winter garb; the trees were bursting into leaf so quickly that from day to day we recognized a glorious change. The plum-trees were whitening with bloom, and the cawings of the rooks in the elm avenues, where the ground was covered with a carpet of coloured flowers—primroses, cowslips, golden cups, violets, and blue-bells—were delights indescribable for the ear and eye.

My wanderings with my mother were prolonged till late in the soft evenings, and it was during one of those sweet, sauntering hours, that I again talked to her of Dame Jenifer's story.

'What became of Jaspar Heniker, and his wife, Kate Cradock?'

'One day you must look over the Heniker letters. They will please you, for Kate and her friend wrote pleasantly to each other. Kate had children, and one of her sons married Jenifer's only daughter. But there was no issue from that marriage. Jenifer's son was to have married one of Jaspar's girls; but he had a spirit like his mother's, I suppose, and he would not fulfil what the mothers wished for. He took his wife from a noble family, and the place has come down to us in an unbroken line.'

'I should like to visit Jaspar's home.'

'It was somewhere near Whitesands. I have ridden there as a girl.'

'And did Henikers live there then?'

'No. It was a low, long, rambling farm-house. Mr. Heniker has let it many years. He was the last, and was in India then. Since that he married a young widow, with a daughter, I think: but he never had any children of his own, so "Dick Heniker," as my father used to call him, was the last of Jaspar's descendants. The house was called

Whiteacres Farm. Dick was a little older than me.'

'I shall ride over there to-morrow,' I said.

And when the morning rose with all the promise of a summer's day, I proceeded to keep my word, ordered Jessie, my favourite, out of the Heniker stables, and after breakfast mounted, and rode away.

There is no more lazy enjoyment, and no one more luxuriates in this particular sort of pleasure than a thoroughly strong man; there is no gentler luxury than a summer ride through a rich country on a good horse—a horse that seems to enjoy itself, and that appears to have some sort of sympathy with the master who rides through the flowery lanes and by the scented hedges, listening to the strong music of the skylark, rising from the short grass—from home to heaven—and feeding, as it were, on sights and sounds with a spirit-satisfying contentment, and a heart full of love.

In such a way I rode that sweet spring day, under a sun as warm as summer, with bright butterflies about my path, and the cuckoo with its sweet monotony almost persuading one in a long summer's day that Time was standing still, and that there was never going to be aught but sunshine in our lives evermore. My way was through a fine rich country, with occasional breaks of picturesque beauty almost reaching to grandeur, where granite rocks rose high, and tangled banks of oak edged the clear waters of rivers which were spanned by wooden bridges, and flowed away among feathery fern-beds, and reflected wreaths of hawthorn flowers as they went along.

I reached Whiteacres at last—a farm standing amidst many enclosures, and having a few fine evergreens to shelter it. I found only one woman and a girl within. She was the farmer's wife. Three dogs rushed out at Jessie and me, but Mrs. Brooks pacified them, and then asked me what I wanted.

I told her who I was, and that I had a fancy to see Whiteacres.

'To whom does it belong?' I asked.

'It's a gentleman high in the army, sir, who takes the rent—I can't tell his name. I know it sometimes. But I think he takes it for some one who is not of age.'

'A Heniker?' I asked.

'Oh, no, sir; they are all gone.'

'Is there anything worth seeing in the house?'

'No, sir. There were some ancient things, but they were all moved about a dozen years ago—just before we came here. There used to be more buildings out that way, but they were pulled down, and the stones used for repairs. There's old arches and window-mouldings round at the back in the walls of the wagon-house and piggeries, sir, if you please to look at them.'

This was all I got for my ten-mile ride, and thinking of how all things live their time and then pass away, and are forgotten, I went back to Heniker.

At last the time came for us to return to London. My mother, in her childhood's home, had been living with me through many tender memories, but she seemed to put them aside as she packed up to go away, and in London she was all brightness, life, and activity, and as proud of her sons as they were happy in their mother. The weather was radiantly bright, and our lives were full of as much enjoyment as life ever yields, and then there came an event.

My mother's friend, Mrs. Chester, had come to London to get dresses and make arrangements for a fancy ball which she was going to give at their home in Hampshire. Two daughters had come to town with her, and my brothers were upon me.

'Now, Heniker, which are you going to marry?'

To marry either of the Misses Chester did not appear a particularly easy thing to do; they were very grand personages, and kept me at a considerable distance, until I was discovered to have a ready pencil for drawing dressed-up figures, and a good fortune waiting in broad acres and the Three per Cents. By degrees—knowledge having made these advances—we became ac-

quainted, and on familiar terms, and engaged to dance certain dances at the coming ball.

We all went to Shortlands; and the night after our arrival were all in the ball-room. Regimentals had been voted sufficiently brilliant dresses for military men, so I was provided with a costume. My brothers had chosen to be attendants on my mother, who was dressed to represent some character which demanded such appendages; and in the midst of a scene far too full of sparkle for me to write about, we stood, admiring, and, to some degree it is to be hoped, admired.

Next to the ball-room, which was crowded, there was another large room, which looked like a bower of fruits and flowers, lighted to perfection; and there a few of the guests, seated among high oleanders, and trained vines, and orange trees, were waiting, or resting, listening to a well-practised band, and being reflected, with their surroundings, in long narrow mirrors. I stood in the entrance of this room, and saw in a mirror towards the end, on my right, the lady with the feather fan—Dame Jenifer, looking as much alive as when her wooing and wedding took place together and at once, in the old hall at my new west-country home.

I consider it no disgrace to declare thus publicly that I gazed with a breathless feeling of surprise, and a sensation so like fear, that I stood rooted to the spot, and most uncertain as to my eyesight; for on looking with determination round the room, and again at the mirror, the substance was not to be seen, and the shadow was gone.

'Don't you dance?—Come here. I want to introduce you.'

'Stop, Chester. There's a woman here with a feather fan.'

'Fifty, I should think. Everybody has a feather fan. It belongs to a fancy dress.'

'No, no; not *this* feather fan—let's find her.'

'Nonsense! Won't you dance——'

'Only with the women who have feather fans—there she is again! Now—flesh and blood, I declare!—now, Chester, are you mad? What

are you staring about? She's handsomer than Dame Jenifer a thousand times; and I'll get to the bottom of this, if it's my grandmother's ghost in good earnest.'

'Miss Clayton,' said Chester, who had been dragged by me across the room, forcibly, 'if you are not afraid of a lunatic—he is a great friend of mine!'

She burst into a low musical laugh. I felt sure she had seen my start of astonishment reflected in the looking-glass.

'This,' said Chester, forgetting my change of name, 'this is Alfred Pelham—Captain Pelham, I mean, I beg your pardon. He wishes to have the honour of——'

'Talking to Miss Clayton about her dress and her feather fan,' I said, interrupting my friend. And then all three indulged in a laugh, and Chester walked away to leave us to our mysteries. Upon which Miss Clayton and I sat down, for I was far too much in earnest for dancing. 'Now, Miss Clayton, what made you appear here in that dress?'

'I chose it because I liked it. I made it with my own hands, helped by my aunt, Lady Ross, and her clever maid.'

She spoke good-humouredly, like a child answering questions.

'Forgive me for keeping to my question. What made you choose it?'

'I have, at my uncle's house, a coloured sketch of a lady on a sofa, with this sort of fan in her hand. She is not a very laudable lady, for we used to say that she cheated us out of a good inheritance by marrying the uncle instead of the heir. And so there was an evil saying that those who inherited from her should never prosper till the two lines were united. But there are no men Henikers left in the world now, and I have dressed myself like the old picture, with no evil feelings in my heart, but a moderate complacency

only, which I believe not to be criminal.'

She made this little speech with the drollest affectation of candour, and the glance of her pretty eyes was just Dame Jenifer's over again. I said, 'And were the families never united?'

'Oh, yes; Dame Jenifer's daughter married her old lover's son, and she brought the picture into the house. But that was of no use. Dame Jenifer's son carried on the elder line, and the old gossips meant that the two lines should become one.'

'I have studied the pedigree, Miss Clayton. I thought Richard Heniker, of Whiteacres, died without children. Allow me to ask—Who are you?'

'Richard Heniker died in India. But he married his cousin, my mother, a widow—Mrs. Clayton. So when my stepfather, who was also my cousin, died, I was the only Heniker left in the world, and I was given to the guardianship of Sir James Ross, because his wife was my father's sister.'

'And is Whiteacres yours?'

'Yes.'

She rose up, and I took her across the room to Lady Ross. She introduced me as Captain Pelham, and I said, under the protection of Lady Ross's presence, 'I *was* called Pelham; but I had to take the name of Heniker last week.' And then Lady Ross, who had learnt all about it, was so glad to know me, and while Mary Clayton coloured crimson, I felt that the aunt had marked me down as 'eligible.'

I danced with Mary Clayton. I talked of Heniker, my beautiful mother, and Dame Jenifer's portrait. I introduced my brothers to her, and we set up a cousinly monopoly of the young lady, which lasted till they called her 'sister,' and I had brought to Heniker, as its new mistress, a new edition of 'the lady with the feather fan.'

G. P.



MR. FAIRWEATHER'S YACHTING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'YACHTING ROUND THE WEST OF ENGLAND.'

I AM certain that one of my ancestors must have been a naiad or a mermaid, for from my earliest years water has been my favourite element. When little more than an infant, it was my greatest pleasure to watch the waves breaking upon the shore, or to wade through the clear pools left in the sand by the receding tide. I could have spent hours most enjoyably beside some river or lake, intent upon the lights and reflections on its surface, or gazing down at the visionary treasures which gleamed in its transparent depths. My mother, however, excellent as she was, did not foster my aquatic tastes; indeed, she had almost as great a horror of the sea as Mahomet; and often did she charge me, when I began to go about unattended, never to approach the 'treacherous' wave. But all was of no avail; the water-nymphs held possession of my heart, and whenever I could steal away unperceived, I wandered to the forbidden shore. I loved to talk to the old fishermen, and hear tales of the old sea; until, by degrees, I began to understand something of vessels, and to have a little model ship of my own. The tall-masted showy-looking craft sold at toy shops, which swam bottom upwards, and dissolved into paint and glue, soon disgusted me, and I became a patron of such of the little village boys as made theirs on improved principles. Nor was I idle myself. I constructed a brig and several cutters, such as, had the Serpentine Yacht Club been then in existence, would, in my opinion, have carried off prizes. But my greatest triumph was the building of a real boat, which, after many failures, I succeeded in accomplishing. I cannot say that its lines were very fine, and it certainly leaked a little, although well beplastered with tar; and was, moreover, so unsteady that no one but myself could sit in it. But I was nevertheless highly proud of my success, and spent some of my

happiest days in paddling up and down in it, and performing mimic voyages of exploration on a pond in front of the house. This was in my twelfth year, and at this time it was my great ambition to become a ship-builder.

But man can only propose. My parents did not intend me thus to 'paddle my own canoe.' They had a decided objection to my entering any kind of business, although they were by no means desirous of maintaining me in idleness. As soon, therefore, as I left the university, I was called upon to select a profession, and I finally gave the preference to the legal, which, while entailing no disqualifications, seemed to offer position and emolument as the reward of skill and application. My name was entered at the Temple, and after eating the appointed number of melancholy dinners, and poring over such a number of distracting volumes that I thought I could understand why Justice is represented blind, I was decorated with wig and gown and launched into 'the profession.' I cannot say that I found its duties particularly arduous, although somewhat tedious, as I sat in my chambers from ten till four daily, in expectation of the arrival of business; but when weeks and months passed away, and left me still unsolicited, I began to suspect that there must be some error in my calculations, and that I must resign the chancellorship to men gifted with some mysteriously magnetic powers. I accordingly devoted myself with more assiduity to the study of the 'Times,' and never omitted reading the shipping intelligence, although it could be of little consequence to me, as I gazed down into that dismal quadrangle, whether the wind in the Channel was N.N.E. or S.S.W. What was it to me whether the 'Salamander' had returned from the east, or the 'Eternity' from the west?—it was all the same in Pump Court.

I grew by degrees more and more

impatient of a life so uncongenial to my tastes, and my sittings became shorter and less regular. Why, I asked myself, should I be condemned to the fate of Theseus in the infernal regions—

‘Sedet eternumque sedebit
Infelix—’

when I had committed none of his crimes? I began to change my course of life—to undertake expeditions on my favourite element, and to be a more constant visitor at my friends' houses. This alteration did not, in my parents' estimation, argue any superfluous amount of wisdom on my part; especially as they heard that I was most frequently seen where there were more smiles than money, and I received as many letters of advice as would have formed a very compendious manual for men about to marry. Here all the rocks and shoals were marked as plainly as in the Admiralty charts. Here the base machinations of daughters and mammas were exposed to view. How deep and dark are the plots laid against the simple and confiding bachelor! How do they lurk privily to catch him in their toils, and make a prey for life of his innocence and beauty!

This advice would doubtless have been of incalculable value to me, but for one reason—it came too late. I had played too long with ‘the tangles of Neæra's hair,’ had been caught in her silken net, and found myself in the centre of one of those enchanted labyrinths ‘from whence no traveller returns.’ For dear Emily's sake I confronted her parents and my own, two solicitors and six bridesmaids—none but the brave deserve the fair—and vowed eternal allegiance to my wife and my profession. I even consented to settle down in Russell Square, a locality I particularly disliked, as being gloomy and unfashionable; but it had the advantage of being near my wife's mother, and that was sufficient to compensate for every drawback.

The ‘sessions of sweet silent thought’ became more bearable now that I had a pleasant prospect before me in the evening; and to in-

crease the attractions of home, our union was soon blessed with a little treasure. This darling pledge I named Arethusa, after the celebrated daughter of Oceanus, and in her second year she began to exhibit some glimmerings of intelligence, and some likeness to me, which seemed to astonish and delight all our female acquaintances. Her health, as she grew up, was not, I regret to say, quite so good as her mother thought it ought to be, and we were recommended to take her annually to the seaside; and there, as she collected seaweeds, or played about the sands, I watched the rippling tide, sat upon the side of some old fisherman's boat, and thought myself again a boy.

During these summer excursions I could not avoid seeing at nearly every seaside resort some of those beautiful vessels which form the pleasure fleet of England; and how, with such feelings as mine, could I feel otherwise than envious of the happy lot of their possessors? They seemed to me to live the lives of the blessed. Free from all the anxieties of other men—visiting at will the most distant parts of the world—initiated into all the mysteries of ocean, and yet constantly surrounded with luxury and refinement: Horace perhaps was right, that care could board a trireme, but I was convinced that she could never set her foot upon a yacht. I felt sure that were I owner of one of these bright, brave vessels, the mere admiration of her form would be to me a constant source of pleasure. My disease was beyond cure; I grew more and more discontented with Russell Square and seaside lodging-houses, and began seriously to consider how I could accomplish my desire. By way of breaking the ice, I asked Arethusa one day playfully what she should think if I were to purchase a vessel like one of those lying before us; and she, being highly delighted at the idea, immediately informed her mamma. When I next met Emily, she said she hoped I was not in earnest in the matter, and that if I were she was certain we should all be drowned. At length, however, she yielded to my repre-

sentations, and entered into my views. But not so Mrs. P—, my mother-in-law. She looked upon me with mingled pity and aversion for being so 'childish,' and for daring to extend my views beyond Pump Court, loudly protesting that none of *her* money should be spent in such a manner. But, unfortunately for her, an old gentleman died shortly afterwards and left me a legacy, which placed me in easier circumstances; and notwithstanding her flattering observation that 'a fool and his money are soon parted,' I resolved to make a bold stroke, brave the smiles of friends and advice of relations, and become once for all a genuine jolly yachtsman. I was not, however, quite so reckless as some supposed me to be, and I determined to purchase at first only a small vessel, until I should satisfy myself by experience that yachting was as pleasant in practice as it seemed in prospect. My aspirations were limited to twenty or twenty-five tons, and I at first entertained the idea of purchasing a screw steamer of that size; as, although old Neptune was at times unmannerly towards strangers, the river gods were ever gentle and hospitable. But I was turned from my purpose, partly by pecuniary considerations and partly by the advice of friends, who represented to me that while in such a vessel I should be confined to very limited quarters, I should also have to swallow an unlimited quantity of smoke and coal-dust; so I determined to content myself with a sailing yacht, and it was suggested to me that if I were only making an experiment, it would be more prudent to hire than to purchase. My negotiations, however, with this view, proved even more unsatisfactory than those of Grantley Berkeley; and having found what a miserable tub I could obtain for fifty pounds a month, I abandoned this project altogether. My next attempt was in a different direction. One morning as I was looking over the columns of 'Bell's Life' for notices of yachts for sale, I came upon an advertisement in which a gentleman stated that he was a yacht-owner, and that he was

desirous of meeting with a companion to join him for the season, and pay his share of the expenses. This appeared to be a most favourable opportunity. Here I could make a trial of sea-life, have the advantage of the experience of an older yachtsman, and at the same time not excite the indignation of my relatives by incurring any pecuniary risk. But, alas! here, too, I was doomed to disappointment. The advertiser wrote in answer to my application, to say that his yacht was of the large burden of four tons, and that he was desirous of meeting with an active steady young man, holding a good social position, who would pay half, or as it appeared to me, the whole, of the expenses, and assist him in the management of the craft. In short, he was to be the captain, and sit in the stern to steer, while I was to be the sailor and work the vessel. This offer I politely declined; indeed I doubted whether I should suit his views, and felt quite certain he would not suit mine, for although I was ambitious of becoming a yachtsman, I was by no means desirous of performing the part of an able-bodied seaman. I was therefore still at sea, or rather on land; and I wrote to several owners whose vessels, from the descriptions in the paper, seemed to be eligible, and the prices of which they stated to be moderate. But upon inquiry there was a wide difference between their notions of moderation and mine. From fifteen to thirty pounds a ton appeared to me excessive, especially as those at the former price were out of repair or otherwise defective. It is almost as difficult to make a judicious choice of a yacht as of a wife—fancy articles command fancy prices, and if sound and handsome, will assuredly be beyond your means. The answers to my inquiries, however, were, I feel bound to admit, most polite; some of the writers, although I had never seen them, took quite a personal interest in my requirements, and headed their letters 'Private and confidential.' One offered to use his influence for me with his friend Lord Rydewater, to induce him to take twenty-nine pounds a ton

instead of thirty; while others wrote in a most airy and fascinating style, asserting that the yacht in question was 'fitted out like a fiddle,' or had had a 'hatful of money' expended upon her. Nearly all betrayed an affecting and almost girlish desire for 'an offer,' and some added significantly that there was such a thing as being too late.

At length when every inquiry had failed, and I had almost abandoned all hopes of success, chance threw in my way a vessel which seemed to suit me exactly. She had not, indeed, quite such fine lines as some might desire, being very broad in the beam and high in the shear; but the former peculiarity was a great recommendation in my wife's estimation, and no defect in mine, as it made her a better sea-boat; and it was suggested that the ludicrous effect produced by the latter, which gave her somewhat the appearance of a butter-boat, could be easily removed by painting the streak on a level with the water. Her owner was an honest Jack, whose broad countenance beamed with good humour and sincerity. How refreshing was it to deal with one of these simple unsophisticated sons of the sea after having been all one's life contending with the artifices of designing landmen! How vastly pleasanter to transact business with an old sailor than an old soldier! He had purchased her out of consideration for the embarrassments of a young gentleman, who had paid five hundred pounds for her the year before, but who, becoming involved in debt, found it difficult to realize his property in time to avoid exposure. Previously she had belonged to a doctor, who had lived in her, with his wife and four daughters, sometimes for three weeks at a time. The internal accommodation consisted of a fore-castle, pantry, saloon, and cabin—I can scarcely call it a 'private' cabin, because the companion ladder passed through it, making it a public thoroughfare. On each side of this ladder was a berth of a singularly deceptive kind, large and commodious at the upper end, but sloping off surreptitiously towards

the foot so as almost to terminate in a point. At the sides of the saloon were two sofas, capable of being converted into berths, and, in its centre, a very large swing table, so contrived that the slightest touch would precipitate its savoury burden into the laps of the convivial guests. How the good doctor and his family ever compressed themselves into so small a space, or managed to exist without such comforts as other people consider necessary, has always been to me an inexplicable mystery. They never appear to have made any improvement in the state of things, except the doubtful one of painting the ceiling blue.

Having come to the conclusion that the 'Zephyrina' would answer my purpose, and the price being within my limit, I was about to close the bargain at once; when Emily, who had not quite such confidence in my nautical knowledge as I had, made it a point with me that I should have her examined by a shipwright. I felt it to be a great injustice to doubt the word of the good old seaman, who had declared her perfectly sound, and not more than six years old; yet the lessons I had learned on land inclined me not to oppose the more cautious, though less handsome, course suggested by my wife. After some little inquiry, I found a shipwright suited to my requirements. He was a spare, wiry man, somewhat below the middle height, and his expression denoted a shrewdness and depth which would have appalled the heart of the most accomplished impostor. His narrow piercing eyes seemed as though they could see through men, or ships, or anything else at a glance, and I felt that even my wife would be satisfied with my selection. This was the individual I was about to bring to bear upon honest Jack, and I must say I never saw two men between whom there was a greater contrast. Well, the day arrived, and Mr. Sharpus arrived, and the old seaman was at his post, and I felt like a criminal. Mr. Sharpus poked and pried into every corner and cranny; and, as if his eye was not sufficiently penetrating, he brought a gimlet to assist it. He

made such a searching examination that I grew weary and impatient, and told him that he need proceed no further. All was pronounced sound and strong, and the shipwright whispered to me aside that she was worth twice the money I was to pay. I did not think it worth while to mention this to the old seaman, but I told him in an off-hand manner that the vessel would suit well enough; and I felt so contented with my bargain, and so elated with the prospect of being a real yachtsman, that I paid his wife several pretty compliments, and told his daughter that her eyes were like my Arethusa's.

'And now,' said Mr. Sharpus, smiling, as I slipped the guinea into his hand, 'you have nothing to do but the decoration.'

This was not such a light matter as might be supposed. It appeared to me that considerable alterations would be necessary to make the vessel even habitable. As she drew but little water, which was advantageous for river purposes, her cabins were so low that your position, when standing inside her, resembled that of Atlas with the world on his shoulders, and reminded me of what I had heard about the 'middle passage,' if not of the cage of Cardinal Balue. The only way in which any improvement could be made in this respect was, to open the deck over the saloon, and place upon it what is usually known as a 'house' or 'booby hatch.' This I accordingly ordered to be done, and the cabin to be raised to the height of five feet six, adding, that my object was, that I should be able to stand without touching the ceiling; but the carpenter, who happened to be a still shorter man than myself, only attended to the latter part of my directions, and, finding that he could stand upright in five feet three, only raised the ceiling five inches. On the top of the instrument of punishment thus constructed he placed a skylight, which was to have moved upon hinges, but as it was easier to make it without, he left it loose, so that, whenever we wished for air, it had to be removed and set upon the

deck, where it soon got adrift and was broken to pieces. I had many other alterations made: a stationary table was substituted for the swing, several drawers were inserted, and the cabins were lined throughout with mahogany.

The next requisite was a boat. Without a boat it was impossible to get either on board or on shore. I accordingly ordered one to be made, of dimensions suitable for the deck; and, as I wanted a thoroughly good article, I employed a first-rate builder, and agreed to pay a commensurately large price. It was to be ready in six weeks, at the expiration of which time we intended to make our first expedition. Meanwhile we were to employ a shore-boat.

After these arrangements I proceeded to select a crew, which was to consist of two men and a boy. One would have supposed that, in so small a vessel, the men would all make themselves generally useful in whatever duties were to be performed; but I found it far otherwise. Even here great distinctions were to be observed in rank and precedence. The captain was to walk up and down the deck, with his hands in his pockets, and issue orders to the crew, who thus consisted of only one man—for as for the boy, he was a mere drudge for performing dirty work, and a safety-valve for the emission of bad humour and language. The next subject in which I found myself shamefully ignorant was that of anchorages. I had supposed that in rivers, a vessel might safely anchor wherever the water was sufficiently deep; but in this I was entirely mistaken. The only place, I was told, at all desirable to be in near London, was Bugby's, which was pleasantly situated between a fleet of colliers and a drained marsh. This locality was, in addition, almost inaccessible; and I soon insisted upon the 'Zephyrina' being moved to Greenwich, where I should have more enjoyment of my yacht, and less to pay for transmitting articles on board. But I soon repented of my temerity. On my visiting her the day after her arrival, imagine my horror at finding an immense hole

broken in her quarter, which, had it been a little lower, would inevitably have sunk her. It appeared that a barge had brought up for the night a few yards astern of her—a circumstance from which I should not have apprehended anything, for I had always regarded a barge as an ungainly but inoffensive draggle-tail, occupying the same position among vessels that a cow or a donkey holds among animals. My captain, however, entertained some misgivings about her, and cautioned the bargemen not to come too near; but they paid no attention to him, and went ashore, and a squall coming on in the night, she broke from her moorings, and drifted right into the 'Zephyrina.' The captain consoled me by telling us that he had taken her name—'The Swan, of Rochester,' and that she was liable to pay all damages; but the Swan had flown away; no one I could find had ever heard of her; and, knowing something of 'the law's delays,' I came to the conclusion that the shortest and least expensive course would be to have her repaired at my own charge.

The time appointed for our expedition had now nearly arrived, and I ordered the yacht to Gravesend. Preparations were made at home for starting on the first of June; but on visiting the vessel the day before, I found the breach as large as ever, and the new boat not arrived. I desired everything to be put in order without delay, and, calling upon the boat-builder, expostulated with him upon his negligence; to which he replied, that he had been very busy, was doing his best, and that, if I pleased, I could see the progress he had made. He then conducted me into a shed, full of chips and sticks, where he pointed to a piece of wood which he said was the keel, fastened to another which was to be the sternpost. If this was all the progress that he had made in six weeks, I gave up all hopes of her being finished before the end of the season, and determined to start with a boat, which, after some hesitation, he agreed to lend me. This was a kind of waterman's pleasure-boat, which had been painted red

and yellow, to attract cockney holiday-makers, and was so large and cumbersome that it could not be taken on board, but had to be towed behind us at the end of a rope, looking just as if we had stolen her from one of the slips along the river. Altogether, our appearance must have been most singular.

We determined that our first voyage should be to Southend; and at length, on the third of June, we took the train to Gravesend, which was to be our starting-point. On our arrival we found, to our dismay, that the only sign of repairing consisted of a man with a hammer and chisel, enlarging the hole in the stern. We had now, however, waited so long that we would not be disappointed; and as the carpenter informed me that he should not finish the work he was then upon that day, I ordered him off for some lead and canvas to patch us up for sea. I offered him an extra gratuity to proceed with despatch, but it produced no effect upon him, except that of causing him to upset his pitchpot into our boat, which still further retarded our operations. At length, at four o'clock, we were ready; the breeze was fair, and I never felt so proud in my life as I did when standing on my own deck, I for the first time gave orders to 'weigh anchor.' One might have supposed that I had been transformed into Æneas, or some such hero of antiquity, and was carrying with me the destinies of an empire; or that I was at least a rover or a corsair, bent upon some desperate enterprise, so great was my enthusiasm for maritime adventure, even upon the sluggish waters of Gravesend.

The wind began to increase as we passed Cliffe, whose white chalk acclivities shone brightly above the tide, and my wife becoming somewhat alarmed, I overheard the following dialogue between her and the man at the helm:

'Is this a fresh breeze?'

'Yes, mum.'

'Very fresh?'

'No, mum.'

'Oh, do let us go through the Jenkins' Swash!'

As this conveyed to my mind a somewhat unpleasant idea, I rose, with a view of going on deck; but I was forced to desist from my attempt, and retire in confusion. My wife, and also Simkins, the maid, have a habit which, although I have not censured them for it, I cannot but condemn. It is that of standing on the top step of the companion; and I beg leave here to remark, for the benefit of all fair Nereids, that such a position is not one in which they appear to the best advantage, as when standing there they present, when viewed from below, the ridiculous appearance of an immense umbrella.

The wind continued to freshen, and to draw more to the eastward, and as the tide had turned, owing to our delay, we were obliged to abandon all hopes of reaching Gravesend, or even of passing through the Jenkins' Swash, a channel leading to Sheerness. Hole Haven, an inlet between Canvey Island and the main land of Essex, afforded the nearest shelter, and for it we accordingly steered. Casting anchor, we prepared our repast of preserved soup and civet of hare, which we found most excellent and acceptable, for the air and exercise had given us good appetites. The question which now arose was, as we were ill provided with bedding, where we should pass the night. The country around us was a low grassy flat of a remarkably inhospitable aspect; but we heard that on the other side of Canvey Island there was a small village called Benfleet, where we might meet with accommodation. Thither we determined to proceed, and having laden the 'crew' with our kit, commenced our journey across Canvey, a distance, as it appeared to us, of about three miles. The island is partly cultivated in grain and partly in pasture, and the inhabitants live in circular cottages covered with thatch, not unlike the wigwams of North American Indians. We observed in several places quantities of a tall plant bearing a long spike of small yellow blossoms. This, our attendant informed us, was agrimony, which made excellent tea; and that

when he sailed in a revenue cruiser the men used to collect it and dry it for the winter. At length, and not before my wife and Arethusa were becoming a little tired, we came in sight of Benfleet, with its grand old church tower rising among the hills embosomed in foliage, and appearing more beautiful to us from its betokening the end of our wanderings. But all our difficulties were not yet overcome; an envious stream, or rather channel, divided us from this desired haven. The ferryman had retired for the night, fastening his boat on the farther side, and it appeared as if all our labour had been in vain, and that we should have to retrace our steps, unless we were willing to wade up to our waists in water. Just when our despair was at its depth, a solution of the problem presented itself in the shape of a coal-cart. It contained a bundle of hay and three ploughmen, who at first spoke rather gruffly to us, and we feared that we should lose our prize, but we found means of silvering their tones, and they made room for us in the unattractive conveyance. By this means we crossed over and proceeded to the Anchor Hotel, which we were told on our arrival was quite full; but while we were debating whether we should return to the yacht, or attempt to reach Southend, pity for our unfortunate position touched the heart of the landlady, and she offered to vacate her own bedroom, and by begging another small chamber, to accommodate us. We thus prepared to retire for the night, not altogether displeased with the adventures of our first day's yachting. The villagers, in a large room near the entrance, were whiling away the night with pipe and song, and had we constituted shrillness and power our criterion of excellence, we should have ranked their principal vocalist among first-rate performers. The words we could not well distinguish, except in the burden of one song, which, however, spoke well for the rest—

' And did she seem to like it?
And did she seem to like it?'

finishing up with the very satisfac-

tory but somewhat vain conclusion,

'I really think she did.'

Our bedroom was an inner chamber, or, as the Bible glossary has it, 'a chamber in a chamber;' and as a few of the 'right sort,' bricklayers I believe, were making a night of it in the outer chamber, Morpheus did not reign supreme until fairy hours. At six o'clock next morning the hot, bright sun streaming in seemed to rebuke sloth, and I rose and strolled through a picturesque avenue up the hill side, until I was rewarded by an extensive view over Canvey and Essex, and across the gently-winding Thames as far as the hills of Kent. In returning I collected some agri-mony, and requested the landlady to make some tea of it, reconciling her to the unorthodox infusion by telling her that it was a specific for rheumatism. It produced a very green beverage with a slight herby flavour, which, especially as I had proposed the experiment myself, I pronounced excellent. My dear wife, partly from the same reason, and partly because she disliked innovations, after putting it to her lips, gently laid it aside. To drink any tea but four-and-sixpenny souchong, which she always carried with her, appeared to her to be little short of profanity.

After breakfast we visited the parish church, a fine old Early English building of stone, with a very curious porch of carved oak. The piscina and seat for penitents were in good preservation, reminding us of the great changes which time has effected. After examining these, and making some inquiries about the village, which we found was infected with the ague, we returned to the yacht with the intention of proceeding to Gravesend, but the east wind being unfavourable for that destination, we decided upon sailing to Erith, where we soon arrived, having made five knots against a very strong tide, and finished our expedition by a white-bait dinner at the Erith Pier Hotel.

It was nearly a fortnight before we made another excursion, and

when we did so we arranged to start from Tilbury. I had written to direct the captain where to meet us; but when we arrived, our boat was nowhere to be seen. We afterwards found that the floating post did not extend to Rosherville, where he was lying. Where is the 'Zephyrina?' Shall we go up to Rosherville to seek her, or to the Terrace at Gravesend? While we are debating and delaying, a sail appears on the farther shore. Can it be the 'Zephyrina?' No; unless she is coming over for us to Tilbury. Yes, it is. We hail, and are recognized. The captain is on board in his straw hat, and seems more at home than at first. The new boat has arrived very bright and clean, but not at present of much use, as the crutches of the oars have been lost. The man who went for her, as he had a long way to row her back, induced a steamer to give him a tow, but did not observe that he had fastened himself just under the waste-pipe of the engine, which soon began to discharge a jet of boiling water. He narrowly escaped being severely scalded, and in the confusion the crutches became unshipped and fell overboard. He brings us the unwelcome intelligence that the boatbuilder demands five pounds for the damage done to his boat by the upsetting of the pitchpot. Phœbus reigns to-day in summer splendour, and the balmy breeze wafts us swiftly on our way. Things now begin to look more comfortable in our cabin; the table is fixed, and everything better appointed. At five we anchored at Southend, near a large Government steamer, in calm water and splendid weather. On rowing to the pier-head we found that we were just in time for the tramway train—a line of open carriages like uncovered bathing-boxes, drawn by one melancholy horse. The tide was low, and as we slowly traversed the long distance which divided us from the town, we had an opportunity of witnessing many common objects of the seashore. The strand was sprinkled over with numerous daughters of the rosy-footed Thetis, lately arrived from London, and fully determined to

make the most of their time; and among other gentlemen we observed one somewhat in advance of the rest standing in a pool of water reading the newspaper. We thought South-end had more attractions than it was generally given credit for. There are good hotels, and clean, comfortable lodgings; some picturesque wild brushwood stretches along the coast, and a clean, wide esplanade. It is not, however, devoid of terrors, and two persons had been lately severely injured; one a gentleman who thought himself so thin that he could stand between the train and the pier railing; the other an old lady who ran so fast to take a warm bath, that she tripped up on the bank and fell on her head.

We travelled back in the evening

by rail to town, and had just settled ourselves for the journey when my wife was much startled and alarmed by a scream from a lady beside her. Expansive crinolines were then in fashion, and the contents of a handkerchief belonging to a gentleman opposite consisted of crabs, which he had caught, and was carrying back with some pride to his friends in London. One of these creatures being of an enterprising disposition, after having wandered over the lower ground, became ambitious, and was commencing an ascent, when, becoming confused in his reckonings, and fearing a fall, he steadied himself by taking a tight hold with his nippers. This natural expedient proved to be the mysterious cause of the lady's fright and exclamation.

(To be continued.)

FAST AND LOOSE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

'QUOS DEA VULT PERDERE.'

SHE'LL play the very devil with him—The Vavasour will!' said rather less languidly than was his wont, my brother Mervyn to me, one morning some seasons back, as we lounged over the Park rails to watch the people in the Row. "'The Bey" is hard hit this time, but, if he goes down like the rest, she'll find he won't take punishment as quietly as others have done. She'll wake the sleeping tiger in *him* if she tries the old game with Molyneux—c'est moi qui vous le dis!' And the speaker settled his hat—just raised in return to a bow and a smile from Valérie Vavasour, the 'first favourite' of that year and the preceding one, as, with Wilfrid Molyneux at her side, she cantered by—and resumed his after-breakfast havannah in silence.

It was a long speech for Mervyn to make, and not a complimentary one, certes. But he was a man who

knew what he was saying, and more than most of us about the pair in question. Indeed, men used to affirm The Vavasour had some special reason for being civil to my languid, imperturbable brother; perhaps because his calm indifference had foiled even her practised fence when, for the first time, and the last, she crossed swords with him. She had let him alone after that; had felt, perhaps, instinctively, that she had no chance with him; and was very gracious and amiable to him on all occasions, notwithstanding. Which didn't prevent Mervyn from watching how it went with others in the game he did not care to play himself. And that game generally ended in The Vavasour's favour; here and there a drawn match, perhaps, where the combatants saluted each other and drew off by mutual consent; but, for the most part, as was only natural, the

subtlest, most fascinating coquette that ever tempted a man to his undoing, had it all her own way. Many a good man, and (which *was* puzzling) many a good *match*—many a prize-parti had been flung away as soon as won, with an equally pitiless indifference, that maddened some, and froze the life-blood of others; but, forewarned as each might be, their fate came ever cruelly unexpected upon all. Each thought himself so sure; each trusted, spite of all secondhand experience, in the treacherous promise of those dark eyes that lured him 'longing and loving' to his doom; each believed the prize so many had failed to win to be within his own grasp; and each in turn had seen the prize escape him—had felt the cold, mocking glance of the changed eyes stab him like a poisoned steel, and had come out of that unequal combat with a wound that would always rankle long, and seldom wholly heal. And (men marvelled much at this) all fared alike—the Croesus, Polwheal, no better than poor Algy Wentworth, who went down in the front the other day leading the 'Lost Children' into a New Zealand pah, and died with her name last upon his pale lips. Little recked she—that brilliant Lamia, as Mervyn called her sometimes—of blasted lives, or wounded vanities, or sorer-stricken hearts of men. Mervyn himself, watching her keenly, never saw her blench—her hand or lip tremble—when he gave her a certain sealed packet that bore her name, found in the breast of poor Algy's fighting-jacket, the day he died; though *she* best knew what had driven the quondam pet of 'Ours' to fling away so eagerly and recklessly a life, that, since the day he saw her face last, had grown too heavy a burden. Perhaps when she was alone that night, the sight of a once dainty glove (soiled and worn now, for the boy's heart had been beating for months beneath it), the glove she had let him draw warm from her hand when they parted one night only a week before the end—of the rose (dry and withered and scentless now) she had given him from her bouquet,

that other night at the Opera, when her smile had 'tangled all his heart,' and she had played for a moment with its first, mad, passionate love—perhaps then, heartless coquette as they thought her, The Vavasour felt something of remorse. But none could guess it. She would take up a new caprice to-morrow as lightly and carelessly as though the one of yesterday had never been. There were always plenty of candidates for her smiles and her favour—dangerous as both were to the winners of them. The siren's song, you know, falls none the less seductively on the sea-rover's ear, because the bones of men, once as young and strong and loving as he, lie bleaching on that smiling shore. The older sea-dogs of the crew may smile at his folly, may warn him of the snare *they* know is laid for him—what does he care? The weird, sweet strain grows sweeter still—divine forms yonder on the golden sands beckon him towards them with their white arms—the glamour of that fell loveliness is upon him—the young blood hot in his veins—and we all know what happens. And so it was with the men who crowded, night after night, through the London season about The Vavasour, 'like bees about their queen.' She must have grown weary of the sameness of those many victories—have longed for a foe more worthy of her steel. And she found him, ere long, in the person of the man who had just passed Mervyn and myself, side by side with her in the Row. They had met for the first time in Paris the previous winter—The Vavasour and 'The Bey,' as they called Molyneux, from a command he had once held in the Osmanli Horse, at the time of the war. (They talk of him still—those wild, reckless troopers, who would have followed him, Giaour as he was, to the gates of Jehanum, and who wept like children when he bade them farewell.) He was idling through the Paris season, wearying fast of the old round of dissipations; and she was turning men's heads, and rousing women's wrath in the salons where she reigned without a rival,

with the same strange, mocking indifference, and yet with the same finished, fatal coquetry we had marvelled at in London.

The Vavasour had a brother, whom, dangerous and ill-broke as he was, she managed with the same firm, light hand that held her fiery Arab, 'Musjid,' in such proud subjection. Broughton Vavasour was not an engaging creature, even at best; men wondered how he ever came by his relationship to Valérie. Evil-tempered, sulky, morose, a hard drinker habitually, though he dared not when 'on duty' (as he called his periodical attendance on The Vavasour and her chaperon, Lady Farniente—she had been left an orphan at fifteen—in Paris or the Bads) go beyond the line—a confirmed coolly reckless gambler—the only being he had ever loved or believed in was his sister; and he loved her with much the same blind, undoubting, unwavering devotion as his mastiff Hecate loved him. A word from her could make him do anything. A word, against her, ever so light an one, uttered in his hearing, or traced home to you, brought you within a dozen paces of the coolest, most pitiless antagonist, the deadliest shot in all the Rifle Brigade, as surely as the sun rose next morning. The Vavasour ruled him wisely and well. A man was indispensable with such a *compagnon de voyage* as Lady Far. There were bills to pay and baggage to look after, details of horseflesh and the roulage to see to; and Broughton Vavasour did it all without an audible murmur. When once they were settled in Paris, or elsewhere, though always at her beck and call, she allowed him, under certain wholesome restrictions, to do as he pleased. He had a den of his own now, Rue Taitbout, where his visitors could find him, and after dinner took himself off, unless he had orders to the contrary, to the card-room at the 'Cercle,' or some other favourite haunt, and was seen of his people no more. Among men, perhaps 'The Bey' stood highest in Broughton Vavasour's estimation. He had always had a sulky sort of respect

for the former's pluck and daring; and this feeling had grown into something stronger, since a certain day during a winter's shooting excursion in Bohemia, when a bullet from 'The Bey's' rifle had rolled the famished wolf he was fighting so desperately dead across him. It was touch and go, but Vavasour didn't say much when Molyneux came up. He wrung his preserver's hand hard—and never forgot the debt. It was years since the two had met. They came across each other, however, this winter at a *petit souper* given by Mdlle. Cerisette of the 'Délassements' as a *pendaison de la crémallière* in her magnificent new quarters, Rue des Mathurins. Vavasour brightened up considerably over his second flask of champagne, and grew, for him, even communicative. 'She wanted to come here again this winter,' he said, meaning his sister, 'or I should have gone down, for the rest of the season, to our place. The horses were all fit, and stand there eating their heads off, now. However, they mean to stay on; so of course I stay on too. This isn't bad tippie, this "Clicquot" of Cerisette's—is it? I must have a glass or so of the V.O.P., though, after it. Walk down the boulevard with me to my shop, will you? We've both had enough of this!'

Molyneux of course had heard of The Vavasour before now—had sneered sometimes, after his fashion, at the stories men told him of her, but he had never met her. He might have done so, of course, had he known she was in Paris and deemed it worth while. The salons where she reigned would have welcomed him gladly enough; but he had grown weary of all that long ago, and had preferred another world to live in, whose denizens, if not so decorously hypocritical, were less exacting and more amusing. But when Broughton Vavasour told him so ruefully that he was in attendance now on Mademoiselle, and that they were settled for the remainder of the winter, there came on him a sudden wish to see this vaunted beauty, and judge for himself how far her supremacy in both capitals was justified. They were

going, next night, Vavasour told him when they parted, to the Metternich's ball; a glance would tell him if she deserved her reputation, and if she *did*—why, after all, a woman of Valérie's stamp would be well worth the trouble of going out of his way to meet. So he thought he would go; deciding lightly, as men do, upon a matter, seemingly of no moment, but which was to influence, in a way he little dreamed of *then*, all his life to come.

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The *salle de danse* at the Embassy was crowded, as usual, with the best people in the capital when 'The Bey' entered it. He had come, as he had determined, to look at The Vavasour in 'review order,' and the rather because he had met her already that afternoon in the Bois. Her carriage came to a standstill with the rest, while the imperial cortège came slowly up the middle of the drive, and he had had ample opportunity to judge for himself how far all the stories of her successes were justified, while her face was turned towards his as her brother presented him, and they exchanged a dozen sentences during the halt. That judgment was in her favour it seemed. He had, indeed, seen few faces like hers—few eyes that had held his gaze as hers had done. Her eyes were The Vavasour's strong point. Flashing scorn or hate, softening to love and passion, luring or proudly pleading, mocking or defying, they would haunt you long. The face, too, with its delicate, clear-cut features, its unmistakeably 'thoroughbred' look, was one not easy to forget either—a face that would strike you in a crowd of fair women, subtly, strangely fascinating—but a 'dangerous' face withal. At least, so thought 'The Bey,' as his critically approving eye took in at a glance face, and figure, and mise, and acknowledged all perfect. 'It will be something to do, at all events, to watch her play,' he thought, as he cantered back. 'She deserves all they say of her, so far. What wonderful eyes! No wonder these French women hate her. She has the *yeux veloutés* of a Spanish Dolores, with

the complexion of a Saxon Edith; and all the paint and pearl-powder in the universe can't give them that! I don't wonder Fürstenstein is mad about her, as they say. Perhaps she means to claim the stakes this time. "Madame la Princesse" is a title worth the winning, even for *her*, not to mention the pleasure of defeating a whole field of jealous ones. We shall see.'

Carl von Hohenlinden-Fürstenstein—a fair-haired Austrian princeling, with two equally strong ruling passions, the one for the *gros jeu*, and the other for a *jolie taille*—was The Vavasour's last conquest then. He had been struck with her at once. Accustomed, for the most part, to meet with nothing more than a mere formal resistance in his numerous *affaires de cœur*, he had perhaps expected, when his bold blue eyes had told Valérie he admired her, to find resistance, in her case, more piquant and better managed—*et voilà tout*. He reckoned without his host. The spell of the enchantress was upon him, and, struggle as he might, he went down before her like the rest—for the first time in his life seriously hurt, too. Would she play fast and loose with him as she had done with everyone? Would a prize like this satisfy her? Would she, as Molyneux said, 'claim the stakes this time?' These were questions the lookers-on asked each other—questions answered in whispers and innuendo behind Watteau fans in every ball-room—discussed more freely in the sacred privacy of her rivals' boudoirs. The boldest prophet had little grounds for his prophecy. The Vavasour was no ordinary coquette, whose moves an old hand could predict with almost certainty. Men seemed fascinated by her, in some strange, subtle fashion they could not explain to you; and, while she exercised it most unsparingly, she ever seemed most unconscious of her power over them. It was the perfection of the art. To steal a heart so skilfully that the loser knows not how he lost it—to promise all, and commit yourself to nothing—to fling back a man's love, at the last, as a worthless prize you never meant to win—

is not this brave sport, mesdames? The Vavasour seemed to think so; and, once in the toils of such a wilful Circe, it was hard for the wisest to foretell how, malgré all his advantages of prestige and position, it would fare with Prince Carl.

But 'The Bey's' eyes are wandering through the Metternich's glittering *salle de danse* in quest of the woman whom he has come to look upon. Sweeping round the crowded circle, to the passionate wail of the 'Amaranthe' valse, with Fürstenstein's arm about her, and his blonde, drooping moustache almost touching her cheek, as he whispers low words in her ear—words which, to judge by the proud smile upon The Vavasour's face, she is listening to, not displeased—he sees her at last. Gracefully as an *Almé* she sweeps by him, piloted swiftly and smoothly through the crush by her practised partner, but not so swiftly that Molyneux fails to notice, gratefully, the simple perfection of 'the favourite's' review-order. Perfect it was indeed. From the softly-glimmering wreath of silver shells, half hidden in the cunningly woven tresses of dark hair, to the tip of the dainty *chaussure de bal*, there was no fault he could find. The Vice-Queen of Parisian society herself lost by a comparison, he thought, when the fascinating Princess welcomed him with all her old winning cordiality, and rebuked him for his tardy appearance, for 'The Bey' had always been a favourite of hers, and once a welcome *habitué* of the embassy salons.

'Elle est ravissante,' she said, following Molyneux's glance, as, half unconsciously, it rested on The Vavasour and her partner; 'elle est ravissante, n'est-ce pas, cette Miss Vavasour? Vous la connaissez?'

'Depuis ce matin seulement. On m'a présenté au Bois. Comme vous dites, princesse, elle est ravissante! Elle a même ensorcelé Fürstenstein, à ce qu'il paraît!'

'Ce pauvre Fürstenstein! Encore une belle passion!'

'Cette fois le jeu vaut bien la chandelle, cependant! Vous reconduirai-je? Voilà M. le Prince qui vous cherche!'

After a few words with which amiable diplomate, 'The Bey' wandered into the cool, softly-lighted winter-garden, and fell into a lounging-chair and a reverie simultaneously. The rustle of a woman's draperies, and Prince Carl's voice, sunk to a passionate undertone now, roused him some few moments later. They were so close to him before he was aware of their presence, or they of his, that their last words reached his ear.

'Mais pourquoi!' Fürstenstein was pleading; 'pourquoi ne voulez-vous me comprendre? Je croyais, cependant, avoir acquis le droit de vous le dire.'

'Le droit?' she interrupted, haughtily; 'le mot n'est pas juste, Prince! Je ne reconnais à personne—pas même à vous—le droit de me dire ce que je ne veux pas entendre! Ah! Colonel Molyneux?'

And, as 'The Bey' came forward, she stood before him, smiling that witching smile of hers, and holding out her hand to him. Fürstenstein frowned, and bit his lip under his heavy moustache at this unlooked-for and unwelcome interruption. The game had not gone quite so smoothly for him as he had expected that night; and now The Vavasour had skilfully seized on the opportunity of stopping play for the present when it stood in her favour. Unused to feel the curb, the Austrian grew restive and sulky, glowered angrily at Molyneux out of his large blue eyes, and nodded impatiently in return to his tranquil 'Bon soir, Fürstenstein.'

Prinz Carl was well aware of the favour women were wont to accord 'The Bey, and, though he never even dreamed of a probable or possible rivalry between them *here*, yet it pleased him none the better that the woman he delighted to honour should have a glance or a word to spare for any but himself. The Vavasour, it is true, had taught him that *she*, at least, would never yield a caprice of her own to one of his—that he might supplicate, but would never command—and, utterly regardless, and apparently as utterly unconscious of his jealous wrath, had smiled ever on whom she chose

to smile. And he had borne it, as she knew he would. She had driven him half mad, sometimes, by passing favours awarded to some one of her entourage who had singled himself out for a moment from the rest; she had tortured him, with a sort of tranquil pleasure in the operation, which had made his punishment very hard to bear. And Prinz Carl had borne it—for the glamour was on him too; and, as he had never loved before, he loved this woman now. He had been pleading hard that night for some word that should tell him he was not, at the last, to be sent away, as others before him had been, longing but despairing, out of their Circe's presence, when she had grown weary of her slaves—some word which should satisfy his jealous, exacting nature, that the prize he wanted might be won.

And she had been rather more cruel to him than usual. Sheer caprice—nothing more. She knew what a hold she had on the man—what was the rank and the place he would give her—what would be her own triumph and her rivals' discomfiture. A word from her, and she might have been Carl von Hohenlinden-Fürstenstein's affianced wife. She didn't dislike him, either; but she was growing just a little weary of her new conquest, and had no mind to abdicate her authority yet awhile. So she had made mock of him, and refused to speak the word he had begged so hard for.

Molyneux's appearance on the scene of course broke off the tête-à-tête, which was growing rather troublesome, The Vavasour thought, and she greeted 'The Bey' with a smile in which there was quite as much of relief as of satisfaction at the rencontre.

The half-dozen sentences, of course, had been spoken between them ere Molyneux came forward and greeted the Prinz.

The latter felt he was, in some way, being neglected, and felt, too, irritated as he was against his suzeraine, half inclined to turn on his heel in marked displeasure.

A moment's reflection — The Vavasour had taught the autocrat, among other matters, the value of

these little moments of reflection, under circumstances like the present, in preserving peace between them—a moment's reflection told him he had better not; and, chafing horribly inwardly, Fürstenstein stood there waiting till it should please The Vavasour to return to the *salle de danse*.

The prelude of the 'Accelerationen'—a pet valse with him, and for which his name stood on The Vavasour's card—came presently floating through the half-drawn outer portières of the *serre*, and fell on the Prinz's ear.

He was vaguely conscious that his sulkiness had been sufficiently marked by the others as to make his part in the trio rather an absurd one; though, in fact, neither The Vavasour nor 'The Bey' had noticed his presence during their five minutes' tête-à-tête. Twisting the long golden moustache he wore rather savagely between his slender, daintily-gloved fingers, Fürstenstein came towards the pair. They had moved, insensibly, from the place where The Vavasour had first halted on seeing Molyneux, and were standing together, now, bending over some curious tropic flower which had caught Valérie's eye.

She looked up, with a half-impatient, half-wearied look, as she heard the Prinz's voice. He was reminding her that *their* valse had begun; and, as he spoke, he offered her his arm, as though nothing doubting he should lead her away.

But there was, perhaps unknown to himself, something of an imperious undertone in his voice which jarred on The Vavasour's ear unpleasantly as he addressed her. He had not quite succeeded in mastering his ill temper; and it manifested itself in the turn of the sentence he put his request in. He spoke as one who had a *right* not to expect to be refused.

If the world's report was true of them, such a right he did, or should have, possessed; but it by no means suited either his suzeraine's temper or her mode of dealing with her subjects that he should exercise it, or that she should admit it.

So she lifted her head languidly

once more from her careless examination of that odorous, deep-hued exotic—and refused.

The Prinz turned pale and bit his lip.

He doubted whether he had heard aright.

'The Boy' smiled under his moustache as he stood on the Vavasour's other hand, and watched the pair. The little scene amused him.

The slow, Teuton blood came back with an angry rush, at last, to Fürstenstein's face. He had never been treated like this before, even by her.

The Vavasour sank down into a low, cushioned seat, under the feathery branches of the palm-trees, when she had spoken her refusal, as though to show she had no intention of returning yet awhile to the ball-room.

The Prinz, in his rage and fury, had still self-command enough to check the words that were on his lips—he was, as I have said, little accustomed to this style of treatment—and operate a conventional retreat.

'Pardon, mademoiselle,' he said. 'Alors, vous me permettrez de me retirer.'

And, with a bow, he turned on his heel, and took his way back to the ball-room.

The Vavasour never interrupted the dialogue she and 'The Bey' were carrying on, and the latter began to wonder whether the stories people told of his companion and Fürstenstein were founded on fact after all.

'She must think her game safe indeed,' he thought to himself, as he stood beside her with his proud head bent down to listen to her light, laughing words. 'She must think her game safe, indeed, if she feels she can afford to treat him like that. It's a bad look-out for him if he's far gone with her. Or is she only playing fast and loose with him, like the others? It must be for the sake of the game if she is, for no man would take this sort of thing from her often, and she isn't likely to find a better parti than Fürstenstein in a hurry. And yet where could a man find *her* peer? The game's

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well worth the winning; but he must be a beau joueur, indeed, who shall pull it off!' And then 'The Bey' had to take his share in the cross play of badinage and brilliant trifling it pleased Valérie to engage in.

Presently her tone changed.

Some reference she had made to a story people told of Molyneux, and which had found its way from the 'valley of sweet waters'—its scene—to the cercles and salons of the western capital—a story of bright eyes and a gallant rescue, and, ere the end, of a lost love and a lost life, and a patient, pitiless vengeance, had altered, as it seemed, the current of her thoughts.

The dark eyes looked up to him with a deeper light in them than he had seen there before; the soft, silvery voice grew deeper too.

'There is something I have not forgotten, indeed, but omitted to say to you before this, Colonel Molyneux.' The Vavasour said then, 'Something Broughton told me long ago, before I knew you. He and I are alone together now, you know, and—you saved his life.'

'That you recal it cancels the debt,' he said, smiling, 'if debt there be. It was never very much. Broughton's couteau-de-chasse was more trustworthy than that rifle of his which missed fire. There was very little necessity for any interference on my part, I assure you.'

'All that is de rigueur, of course,' she said. 'Broughton, who speaks so little, spoke differently when he told me, long after, of what he owed you. At all events, if you choose, you have a claim on my gratitude, as well as on his.'

Dangerous the glance that rested on him as he leant over her seat—dangerous the words she spoke, and the smile that sent them home to him.

Breathing that languid air, heavy with strange, subtle-working odours, alone with a woman whose looks and words, as some averred, and aver still,

'Could quicken all the life-pulse of a man,
Like a draught of fiery wine,'

'The Bey,' case-hardened as he

was, felt his own life-pulse stir unwontedly.

'If I choose,' he said slowly, as their eyes met. 'You understand temptation, Miss Vavasour. You tempt me to try my claim now, and—ask you for the valse you refused Prinz Carl.'

As he spoke, the sonorous clang of the brass, as the horns took up the rhythm of the 'Accelerationen,' reached them from the *salle de danse*.

The warm blood showed itself for a single second on Valérie's cheek. But 'The Bey's' boldness met with no reproof.

'Light guerdon!' she laughed. 'And why *this* valse, monsieur?'

'Because it would not be light guerdon.'

'No? As you will, then.'

The touch of her gloved hand, as it rested on his arm, and he led her away, after those words of assent, sent a long-forgotten thrill through Molyneux's frame. The subtle fascination this enchantress distilled was doing its work already, even on one so well tried in the furnace as he was. He was too old a hand at the game to betray himself by word or look then; it was only later that Valérie knew that she had won it in her first hand.

Louder and louder grew the clang of the horns as the two reached the outer portières which hung between the winter garden and the ball-room.

The valse circle had widened; and round it the whirl of dancers never stopped nor stayed.

A brilliant cohue. Uniforms glittered, diamonds flashed and sparkled under the soft gleam of the many lamps. Above the sound of voices and the noise of many feet floated the stirring music of the orchestra.

As Wilfred Molyneux and The Vavasour passed through the portières, a man standing near started, and, with a half-choked Hoch-Deutsch expletive, moved one step towards them.

Neither saw him. Making way through the crowd about the circle, Molyneux and his partner passed on. The next moment 'The Bey's' arm

was close about the daintiest waist it had ever encircled; and, with the thrilling clasp of her hand on his, he was piloting The Vavasour through the crush.

And Carl von Hohenlinden-Fürstenstein—his temper by no means soothed by the fierce, quick draughts of champagne he had swallowed since we saw him last—who had watched the pair from the moment they entered the room, turned sharply away from the sight, in a white heat with jealousy and rage.

'The Bey' and his partner had got fairly into their swing by this time. They had started with that swift, graceful Viennese step—surely the most perfect valse-step ever invented—Valérie affected, and in which Molyneux had graduated during pleasant sojourns at the Austrian capital long ago. Smoothly and swiftly through the swaying crowd, without hindrance or pause, his strong right arm round her, in a firm, steady grasp, her face bent down a little, as her head drooped towards his shoulder; her lips moving in low reply to the words he spoke in her ear—the most perfect pair in all that brilliant salon swung round, till, reined in, suddenly, like a hot steed checked in full career, the measure ended with a crash, and the 'Accelerationen' valse was over. Through all his life to come 'The Bey' never forgot that valse—the ten minutes that seemed like one, when, for the first time, he held the direst, subtlest enchantress he had ever met, in his arms, and felt her breath glow warm upon his cheek, and the magic pressure of her hand on his;—never, in all his life to come, the strange thrill which, almost from the first, the sight of her had sent swiftly through him, the glamour that fell on him who had thought his armour of proof so sure and so impenetrable, while she spoke, while her hair touched his, while he held her closer and closer, in that intoxicating whirl.

If she had meant that he, too, should wear her fetters—if she had meant to bring him, like the rest, to her feet, this man whom many a woman before to-night had risked much and lost more to tame to her

will, and in vain, The Vavasour had gone far to effect her purpose already.

She had roused what Mervyn had called 'the sleeping tiger' in 'the Bey,' the fierce, keen passions of a man who had learned to hold them well in hand, indeed—to hide under the cynic's mask before the world's eye the signs and the sight of them, but who had never learned to count cost, and who recked little whither or to what they drove him, so he came at last by his end.

Any other woman living, perhaps, would have failed to do what The Vavasour had, wittingly or unwittingly, done to-night.

But hers was just the loveliness to attract, hers just the fascination to enslave, a man like Molyneux. Not that he would ever, to quote Mervyn once more, 'take punishment quietly;' but that, once under the spell, the enchantress was mistress of his fate; that, to win her, he would have pawned his soul, or flung down his life, or forfeited his honour.

I do not mean, you know, that this was the work of that night at the Metternich's ball. The cup she held to his lips he only tasted then. But later a thirst for deeper draughts from that Circean goblet came upon him, and she let him drink his fill.

Of all men she had met, Wilfrid Molyneux was the only one, perhaps, whose subjection The Vavasour had really felt to be a task worthy of her powers.

In him, as I have said, she found a foeman worthy of even her practised steel. For you must not think she, practised coquette as she was, penetrated the mask which 'The Bey' wore so easily and so well—the mask that hid for many a day the riot of passion, and longing, and desperate wild love for her which she had woke to life within him—that she penetrated this mask at once.

They crossed swords often and often, and she could never flatter herself, for a long time, that she had ever got fairly inside his guard, still less that her point had ever penetrated his mail.

What wounds he got he knew well how to hide. And she, foiled for once, only grew keener in her determination to conquer.

She drove Prinz Carl nearly wild—as wild, that is, as the fair-haired Teuton could be made—with this new caprice of hers for 'The Bey.'

Fürstenstein had watched the pair that night at the Embassy with an evil, jealous eye. But he was too sulkily stubborn to do aught to make his peace with his mistress, and twice more, ere she left the *salle de danse* with weary Lady Far, he had seen her fling over a valseur in Molyneux's favour.

Still he kept sullenly aloof, till he saw she was going. He had never been so hard-hit in his life before, remember, and he pocketed his dignity and his principedom for once, then, and moved towards her to escort her to her carriage. She never seemed to notice him till her hand lay once more on 'The Bey's' arm. Then she smiled her good-night to him, and left him, fairly transfixed at the audacity which could presume to treat him—Carl V., Prinz von und zu Hohenlinden-Fürstenstein, a reigning sovereign—in this fashion.

He drove away presently to the Cercle, and bet savagely over the *écarté-table*, drinking the champagne he affected hard and thirstily, and went to bed that night with a resolve to bear what he had borne from that coquaine d'Anglaise—as he ungallantly apostrophized Valérie—no longer, a resolve which, of course, he broke the next day, and the next, over and over again.

He was in the toils, you see, and could not help himself.

He watched the progress of the little game Valérie was playing with 'The Bey'; he saw himself losing ground slowly but surely; knew that his rival (he had, unwittingly, got to think of Molyneux as his rival by this time) was accorded favours he would have begged in vain for; heard whispers that made him mutter savage, guttural oaths to himself as he gnawed his tawny moustaches and bore it all.

The Vavasour expected so much from him; and, true to her woman's

instinct, never spared him in the slightest.

She had broken down 'The Bey's' guard a little once or twice of late, and till she had fairly vanquished him in the duel they were fighting, cared little for aught else.

Murmurs, deep, if not loud, were heard among the men who composed The Vavasour's entourage, at this new caprice of their wilful sovereign.

Fürstenstein himself, when the wine was in him, and high play had flustered him a little, used words in the tabagie of the cercle which it was as well didn't come to the ears of those concerned. But it was not till one night, at the Opera, that he fairly broke out.

He had been sitting in the omnibus-box with Artus de Vrière, Belhus, Caderousse, and others its frequenters, sullen and silent, for an hour or more, his glasses levelled at a loge opposite, where The Vavasour and her chaperon were ensconced. Presently the door of the box opposite opened, and the man whose arrival the Prinz was watching entered.

Fürstenstein turned pale. His hand shook as he tried to steady his glass, his lips worked, but he said nothing.

'Le voilà qui arrive!' said Artus de Vrière, who had been watching The Vavasour's box too.

'Qui donc?' asked De Belhus.

'Le Bashi-Bazouk—ce Molyneux, qui nous a volé la Vavasour. Hein, Prince?'

'Le bienheureux!' said De Belhus, plaintively. 'A-t-il de la chance—lui?'

'C'est ce que je veux voir!' muttered Fürstenstein, turning his glass towards the stage.

But he never lost sight of 'The Bey,' who sat a little behind Valérie, in a low-toned conversation, in the loge opposite.

Presently the act-drop fell. The Vavasour's box-door opened again, and Molyneux had, for a moment, to resign his seat to the new comer.

Fürstenstein saw him rise, and the door close behind him.

Then he too rose, and touched De Vrière on the shoulder.

'Venez,' he said, 'j'ai besoin de vous. Vous aussi, De Belhus.'

The two men looked at him. He was very pale, and twisted a glove in his fingers with an irritation he could neither suppress nor conceal.

Curiously, half suspecting what he meant, the two men followed him into the foyer.

He meant mischief. He had been worked, little by little, into a state which would have driven him mad had it lasted much longer.

His passion for Valérie, and his jealous hate of Molyneux, his rival, had reached their climax at last.

As the three men, arm-in-arm, entered the foyer, Molyneux met them.

He nodded to De Vrière and De Belhus, and held out his hand, as usual, to Fürstenstein.

The latter drew back, with a gesture there was no mistaking.

'Non pas!' they heard him mutter, with an oath. 'Pour vous—je n'ai que ceci!'

De Vrière caught his arm, just in time.

The twisted, crumpled glove he would have flung in the man's face he hated, fell at 'The Bey's' feet.

The latter's sang froid stood to him here as it had done under worse even than this.

He bent down, and lifted the crushed glove quietly from the floor where it lay.

The others looked on. Beyond themselves there had been no other witness of this little scene. All passed quick as thought.

'Je vous comprends, M. le Prince,' Molyneux said, in his wonted tranquil tones. 'L'outrage était inutile! Come, Vandeleur.'

And bowing formally to Fürstenstein and the others, 'The Bey' passed his arm through Durham Vandeleur's, and walked away.

* * * *

'Pistols—rendezvous at the Pelouse, in the Bois, at seven;—it's all arranged, old man,' Vandeleur said, an hour later, as he came back to Molyneux's rooms, after a brief meeting with Belhus and De Vrière.

He was an old comrade of 'The Bey's,' Durham Vandeleur; had seen him under fire time and often,

and had little fear for him now. But just a shade of anxiety crossed his handsome face as he added—'I didn't like to refuse when they proposed the barkers, Wilfrid: but he's a devilish good shot, Fürstenstein is, you know; and he means mischief.'

'So much the worse for him. Whatever happens is his own doing. I can't wait any longer, Durham. Thanks for all you've done for me. I shall be back here by six, to dress. You won't come to Madame de Presle's? Then au revoir!'

And 'The Bey' went off to claim the valse against which his initials stood on The Vavasour's ball-card.

She didn't know, of course, that the man whose step went so true with hers, who could talk lightly and laughingly as he whirled her through the press, and who only held her hand a thought longer than usual in his when he said good-night, was going to danger, perhaps to death, for her sake. She might have thought less of her conquest, more of *him*, if she had known it, mayhap.

At ten minutes past seven, in a well-known clairière in the Bois, at either end of a measured distance, 'The Bey' and Prinz Carl stood facing each other, waiting for the signal to fire.

'Messieurs,' said De Vrière, who was to give the word—'messieurs, êtes-vous prêts?'

Neither spoke; but the Prinz bowed in assent.

A moment's pause, during which Vandeleur, standing a little on one side his principal, cursed the punctilious Frenchman, in his heart, for the delay; and then, in rapid succession,—

'Un!—Deux!—Trois!'

Then the report of both weapons, as of one—a mist of smoke that hung over the two adversaries. When it cleared away 'The Bey' was standing still in his place; but Prinz Carl had fallen heavily, and De Vrière and the other seconds were bending over him.

CHAPTER II

'LAMIA.'

'I say, Durham, what has "The Bey" been killing Fürstenstein for?' asked an English attaché, meeting Vandeleur that afternoon in the drive; 'the story's all over the place. Tell us all about it.'

'Fürstenstein *ain't* killed,' responded the other; 'got a bullet somewhere about the hip; that's all. Won't be able to walk for six weeks, they say.'

'Well, but what was the row about?'

'Don't know; except that the Prinz brought it all on himself. Behaved like a lunatic. Served him right if Molyneux had done for him. Deuced glad he hasn't, though, all the same.'

'*Must* have been about a woman, you know,' yawned Craven. 'Fürstenstein was mad about The Vavasour, and she's taken up pretty strongly with "The Bey," of late. Dare say it was about her.'

'Shouldn't wonder. But Molyneux said nothing. And he ain't the sort of fellow to ask.'

'Ah! And so Fürstenstein ain't killed, after all?'

'No; only winged.'

'Bore! Took the odds he *was*, you see. You dine with us to-night, remember. By-by!'

And Craven drove on.

'Wonder whether The Vavasour *was* the cause of the row?' thought Vandeleur to himself, twisting his big blonde moustache meditatively, as he lounged on towards the lake. 'Hope not, for Wilfrid's sake. Bad business if he's really hit with her!'

The two people in his thoughts passed him at that moment.

Molyneux was riding by the side of Valérie's carriage, so intent on what she was saying that he never noticed Durham's nod and wave of the hand.

As Craven had said, the story had got all over Paris before noon.

Fürstenstein was a man of too great mark in society for society not to interest itself in his doings; and a hundred different versions and explanations of the affair had been

started and vouched for already. The seconds had been discreet, and said nothing. No word of the gross provocation which the Prinz in his mad fit had been guilty of had been uttered by any of the witnesses of the scene in the foyer of the Opera; and, but for Fürstenstein's known passion for The Vavasour, a plausible explanation might have been wanting for the duel.

As it was, there was little difficulty in divining the real motive of one, at least, of the combatants. And then the tongues of the scandalmongers were loosened, and went to work with a will, and with a vengeance.

How they pitied The Vavasour's last victim; how, in malignant whisper and inuendo, they condemned her; how they coupled her name with Molyneux's; how they, with smiles and shrugging of shoulders, wondered, and were horrified, and wickedly incredulous, matters not.

Valérie heard the story in a Legitimist drawing-room, in the Faubourg, where she was sitting through a duty-visit.

It was told by a woman who, having tried her hand on Prinz Carl herself, and failed rather ignominiously, seized avidly on the chance of inflicting a little 'safe' torture on the rival for whose beaux yeux Fürstenstein had deserted her.

Madame de Lansac, the woman in question, of course gave a version d'occasion of the matter.

'Hélas! oui,' she said, in reply to a leading question from her hostess; 'it was, unhappily, only too true; ce pauvre M. de Fürstenstein had fallen a victim to his gallant devotion for'—Madame de Lansac paused significantly here—'for a person whose name had been hitherto kept religiously a secret, but whom it would not perhaps be difficult to name. M. de Molyneux had used words which M. le Prince had felt bound to notice in a marked manner, and a duel had been the consequence—a duel in which M. le Prince had been severely, mortally, perhaps, wounded. C'était affreux.'

'And who is this nameless person, comtesse?' asked the old duchesse,

who had long since seceded from the coteries and the salons where, under the old régime, she had been wont to reign, and who consequently knew little or nothing of the fashionable cancons and gossip of the new Paris. 'Who is this nameless belle?—for it is a woman, of course. Has she a name one may hear? They tell me preux chevaliers now-a-days don't scruple to cut each other's throats for ces dames de l'autre monde. Does your belle inconnue belong to ours?'

Madame de Lansac glanced at Valérie before she answered.

The Vavasour lay back indolently in her deep fauteuil, trifling with the lace of her parasol, as though the conversation had no interest for her beyond that which mere courtesy exacted from her. Not a trace of any emotion, but a languid curiosity, showed itself on her countenance. For aught the other could tell, her pulse never quickened, nor was her self-command shaken in the least degree. The keen eyes of Claire de Lansac—keener than ever in her spite and malice—detected never a quiver of a nerve in that delicate-pale proud face she watched so sharply—never a start, or movement of limb.

For a moment, this perfect stoicism confounded the torturer.

Could it be, after all, that there was *another* cause for the duel? But no; her jealous instincts told her she was right. It was for her rival that the man she had marked down for herself had risked his life—for nothing else.

Could she have penetrated the mask which Valérie had learned to wear so perfectly, that she wore it most easily to outward seeming when it nearly stifled her; could she have penetrated that, she might have been more confident in the use of the poisoned, silvered steel—in *this* case, at least.

It was the first Valérie had heard of the rencontre. The shock was, even for her practised nerves, sharp, and sudden, and severe.

A duel, in which one man was perhaps mortally wounded—a duel, and *her* name mixed up with it! That was her first thought. You

see, Molyneux untouched, she didn't waste much reflection on the mishap of his adversary. But it *was* unpleasant, all the same. And then there was her natural woman's emotion at hearing so abruptly of wounds and death, knowing that she was the cause, too; and, which was worse, that other people had not scrupled to say as much.

But that lie of Claire de Lansac's, about the Prinz's devotion, fell harmless. She never doubted Molyneux. She trusted him enough to feel sure that whatever scandal might assert as to her share in the matter, *he* had given it, neither by word or deed, grounds to say anything. And so she sat there, waiting coolly for what Madame de Lansac would say next.

'To ours, I hear,' the latter replied, in answer to the Duchesse's question; 'but, at present, her name is only hinted at. But there are circumstances—M. de Fürstenstein's known devotion to——'

'Take care, comtesse,' laughed The Vavasour; 'we know the shrine at which the Prinz was wont to worship. Don't criminate yourself!'

The other, her weapon turned against herself so unexpectedly, shot a venomous look at her foe.

'Mademoiselle affects to misunderstand. I speak of a person whose treatment of M. de Fürstenstein little merits his devotion. Perhaps mademoiselle can divine who that person is?'

'I?' the Vavasour answered, rising languidly. 'I am not quite so au courant of M. de Fürstenstein's numerous affaires de cœur as you appear to be. But, if what you say be the case, *you* are clearly innocent in the matter, comtesse. Every one knows that *your* treatment of M. de Fürstenstein merits all his devotion! Adieu, chère duchesse—au revoir. We must leave Madame de Lansac's mystery unravelled, I fear.'

And Lady Far, rousing providentially from her doze, Valérie and her chaperon took their departure. As they drove by the Barrier of the Star, presently, on their way to the Bois, 'The Bey' joined them.

Cool hand as she was, Valérie could not prevent his seeing she

knew what had happened since they parted last, when she greeted him.

Ignorant as yet of all the details, she knew that it was for *her* this man had risked his life—she never thought of Fürstenstein—that it *might* have been they parted last night for the last time, and, as she gave him her hand now, she manifested, indefinitely, but, to him at least, unmistakeably, something of her thoughts.

It was no time or place for explanations, even if either had wished to speak of what had happened; and so, while the thoughts of each belied the light words their lips uttered, these two, bound together by a subtle tie, talked of matters all the world might hear.

She knew all, later—the horrible provocation and its punishment.

For a moment Valérie shuddered as she thought, 'If he had killed him? would the stain of blood be upon his hands or hers? Had she not driven Fürstenstein to commit an outrage that might have cost him his life? And if Molyneux's bullet had slain him, or if he had killed the other, would not the crime be hers?'

Her self-condemnation and upbraiding did not last long. After all, was she responsible?—she, who had tolerated the Prinz's pursuit while it pleased her vanity, or amused her, as other women had done—was she responsible for the effects of his ill-temper when she grew tired of him? Und so weiter.

Besides, she was growing so interested in the little game she was playing with Molyneux, that she had scarcely leisure for unpleasant reflections. It pleased her well to tame, as she thought, this tiger to her hand; to hold all the fierce, hot passions she had woke to life once more in this man in check, as it were, with a silken thread; to see the proud head, which to no living woman had bent so low before, bow down to her; to read day by day, and as though against his will, the signs which told her that, sooner or later, he too must be hers.

She did not hurry matters. The *status quo* suited her present mood. Of all men she had known, 'The Bey'

was perhaps the only one who had taught her pulse to quicken at his coming, at his look, or at his words. And, to one who had played fast and loose with so many, so long and so unscrupulously, there was a strange, keen pleasure in this. It would not last long, she knew; but while it did there was no need to precipitate a crisis. Perhaps, though she would not have confessed it even to herself, she rather dreaded that. A vague notion that 'The Bey' might be very difficult to deal with when, as of course she would do, she got tired of their liaison and wanted to break it off—a notion that this man would not prove so tractable as the rest, that the tiger in him might not, after all, be so effectually tamed as that she should escape quite scathless at the last, haunted her at times, spite of her confidence in her own power and skill.

But she went on. Till the Paris season ended never a day passed but Molyneux's horses stood chafing and restless in the courtyard below, while 'The Bey' sat in Lady Far's dainty salon talking *vétillies* decorously to her and Valérie,—till the luncheon libations of Clicquot took effect at last, and languid Lady Far slept the sleep of the just in her especial *dormeuse* in the screened corner.

And *then*, I fancy, the conversation between the other two grew lower-toned and more interesting. In the Bois, at the Opera, men grew accustomed to yield their place at The Vavasour's side, more or less gracefully, to 'The Bey' whenever he approached. Valérie never troubled herself for a moment about what on-lookers thought or said of her. It pleased her to have 'The Bey' beside her, to listen to a man whose voice had a subtle charm for her none other had, and she knew no law but her own will.

And he? Ah! it might have turned a stronger head than his, this preference she showed for him, which a bystander might think sheer caprice, or only natural towards one who had saved Broughton Vavasour's life, but which he, despite many an ill-brooked warning and occasional internal doubt, was be-

ginning to ascribe to another motive.

Yes. This *viveur*, whose experience should have stood him in such good stead here, found it, like most systems of philosophy, fail him in his need. Experience? what booted that? Never in all his life had he met a woman like Valérie.

He had promised himself that he would stand by and, for mere pastime, watch her play. And now, he himself was the player, and the game was going against him.

He felt that. Struggle as he might, he *knew* she must conquer in the end. He put away from him the thought that, when the end came, he might fare no better than the rest. He closed his eyes, wilfully and desperately, against the possibility that she was playing fast and loose with *him*; for he knew himself too well not to dread the consequences, for her as for himself, if this were so. But the end had not come yet.

As I told you, Valérie did not hurry matters; and 'The Bey,' too, was on the defensive still.

He had himself well in hand, yet, when they two were together. She had not brought him to that point when a man sets all his fate upon a cast, 'and wins or loses all.'

And when Lady Far and her charge went back for the London season to Lowndes Street, and Broughton Vavasour was released from his squiring of dames, and fled to more congenial pursuits, 'The Bey' might have broken the yoke from off his neck, and joined that expedition against the big game in the African deserts, just about to sail from Marseilles, and whereof Durham Vandeleur had, with unwonted pertinacity, adjured him to become the leader.

Might have done. Ay, as they tell you a man may fight against and conquer his fate.

'The Bey' did not even struggle against what he felt was his—as you or I no doubt would have done.

Break his yoke! He would not, even if he could have done it—*then*.

Durham Vandeleur wrung his old comrade's hand hard when they parted one night at the Paris and

Lyons station, and looked wistfully after 'The Bey's' stalwart figure as he made his way through the crowd, and the train began to move slowly away from the platform.

The insouciant Guardsman was troubled with strange and sore misgivings as to how it would go with the man he had long loved as a brother, taken inextricably now in the toils of a Circe ever fatal, ever pitiless, against whom he had done his honest best and only lost his labour; and the big travelling flask of curaçao punch was half empty and three mighty regalias reduced to ashes before Van recovered his equanimity.

The task would have been a harder one still had he known that he had looked his very last on Wilfrid Molyneux's face that night, had wrung his friend's hand in that honest, loving gripe of his for the last time.

A week later and Lady Far and The Vavasour were back in Lowndes Street.

And thus you see how it comes to pass that we saw them—Mervyn and I—pass us that morning in the Row—'The Bey' and Valérie together.

He had followed her over the narrow sea, as he would have followed her from Paradise, straightway, across the fixed, fathomless great gulf that lies between the two eternities, had she willed it.

Closer and closer the silken fetters, that were stronger than bands of iron, were binding him; nearer and nearer was coming the end.

As the pair cantered side by side up the Row, that sunny June morning, those who knew them wondered, as they saw them pass, whether the 'Favourite' had found her master at last. Reports of the marked favour Valérie had accorded 'The Bey' during their sojourn in the other capital had reached the London world, of course, ere this; and the unwonted duration of their liaison gave some ground for her rivals' secret hopes and reiterated asseverations that all was settled between her and Molyneux. How they hoped and prayed that they prophesied rightly! It seemed almost too much to anticipate that the Circe who for so long

had robbed them or their children of men who were their lawful prey, would cease, as, once married, they promised themselves she *should* cease, from troubling them any more.

But they backed up the whisper that was going the round about the favourite's conquest, industriously and unceasingly, nevertheless.

If nothing else came of it, and The Vavasour disappointed them after all, there would be wholesome food for scandal, such a scandal, perhaps, as, skilfully worked against her, might rid them for ever of the woman they had conspired to hate.

So, that The Vavasour had accepted, or was to accept, Molyneux, came to be looked upon as a certainty. In a mere sketch, like this I have tried to do for you in pen and ink, details, *ami lecteur*, must, if you care to have them, be worked in by yourself. And perhaps, if even there were space here to give you them, records of the daily progress of Molyneux's enslavement would only bore you. It was not very marked either. In this age of ours, when the Art Of Taking Things Coolly is *the* art, *par excellence*, which it behoves a man to be proficient in, men shut their faces with a mask—worn more or less easily—when the world's eye might chance, otherwise, to read there the signs of the passions stirring within, or the hidden anguish, 'the wound beneath the cloak,' that may rankle, and smart, and torture, but must never be betrayed.

Stoicism, such as we men of these days must learn and practise, has, I think, not been till now. And so those who watched 'The Bey' and Valérie never surprised on the face of either a sign which should confirm or weaken their conjectures.

'The Bey' was hard-hit, but he had not yet gone down like the rest. At Circe's feet he had not yet bowed and fell. Till she had him there, Valérie never dreamed of sparing him.

When that proud head was humbled, when she had her foot upon his neck, when he was hers and had told her so—what then?

In a waking dream, sometimes, when he had just left her, and that

low, deep voice of his yet thrilled her ear, she saw him, as she would have him, conquered and pleading; saw his swarthy face blanch, his dark eyes gleam in sudden wrath and agony, as her own stabbed him pitilessly, and her light, mocking words cut him like a knife, and in her face he read his fate. And then—she shuddered, even while the thrill of her triumph ran through her, as though she felt the grip of the wounded tiger she had failed to tame.

At other times she thought, dreaming still, that it might well be that, conquering, she might herself be conquered at the last; that, when she had him at her mercy, her hand might falter and loose its weapon; and that in her eyes he might, spite of herself, read that which should make him take her in those strong arms of his, and wring from her lips confession that he was victor after all.

So her mood varied.

It might perhaps, though it is hard to say, have fared better with 'The Bey' if that whisper about his success with Valérie had not come to the latter's ears.

She heard it one night when Molyneux had just left Lady Far's box.

They were going—'the Vavasour' and her chaperon—next day to a little cottage by the river and the green Twickenham meadows, whither Lady Far was wont to fly from her worries, occasionally. The Vavasour's meditations ere she slept, after listening to this mischievous cancan, 'I fancy, decided Molyneux's fate.

It was not too late to give these tattlers the lie, and show them she was not so easily vanquished as they believed. Did *he* think himself so sure? Was the game so certainly in his hands that they thought he could win it as he chose? Had he given cause for what she had heard?

She wronged him, thinking such thoughts of him as these; and she knew it.

But, with a kind of angry obstinacy, she steeled her heart against him—stopped her ears against all inner voices that pleaded

for him—fought down the influence that the great love she knew he bore her, had, spite of herself, exercised over her, as an absurd weakness—shut her eyes to all the consequences to him and to herself.

The end she knew must come, came at last. The two were together, and alone, in the morning-room, of the villa, with its long French windows opening on to the verandah and the smooth lawn of Lady Far's flower-garden beyond.

He had spoken; and now there was a silence, broken for a while, only by the faint summer airs which rustled the twining creepers, and the drowsy hum of winged life without.

He had spoken—standing there before her with his arm resting on the low mantelpiece; and, his eyes fixed steadily on hers, he was waiting her answer.

What words he said, it matters not to tell you, at length.

Eager, passionate words that should have touched her, and that did touch her, heartless though men called her. He had pleaded with her, as he had never done with living woman; he had made the arbitress of his fate, and set it all on this one cast. The game was hers; and this, the worthiest foe she had ever met, vanquished, disarmed, and at her mercy.

Her triumph was very sweet to her. As I said, his words had touched her; but her woman's instinct was strong within her; she could not, for the life of her, forego her victory yet.

She rose, and, with a little silvery laugh that jarred on 'The Bey's' ears like the harshest discord, made him a low, mocking reverence.

White to the lips, with angry, gleaming eyes, he made one stride towards her and caught her hand in his grasp.

'Do you dare!' he muttered, hoarsely—'My God! Valérie—do you dare trifle with me, after what you have done?'

Not the usual style of despairing lover, this; but, as Mervyn had said, 'The Bey' was not good at taking punishment quietly.

She, in her heart, was scarcely

wroth with him for using her in this way; but she could not yield to him, yet.

'Let go my hand,' she said; 'you hurt me.' And indeed the slender, delicate fingers seemed all bruised and crushed, as he released them.

'You had a right to speak what you have spoken,' she went on—'a right to be answered. I admit both. But if my answer does not please you, you have no right to say to me what you have just said.'

'Answer me!' he said again, not heeding her; 'yes or no.'

The consciousness of her power made her pitiless, as she had ever been to men when the game was won. The scornful light shone in her dark eyes that so many before him had seen there; the scarlet lips curled in their mocking smile as they spoke, lowly but distinctly, 'The Bey's' sentence—

'No.'

He fell back from the sight of her, this terrible Lamia, who had lured him to his destruction, as though that single word of hers had stricken him with his death-blow. He turned from her to hide the mortal agony that seized him and racked the strong man as with physical torture.

And for a moment there was silence again. She stood still, waiting till he should say more.

He lifted his bowed head, presently, from his hands; and then, on his white, transformed face, she could read what she had done.

'And you tell me this,' he said, in a voice so altered that she almost startled—'you tell me this, whom for months you have been luring, wantonly, into your snare like the veriest—'

'Stop!' she broke in, hurriedly and passionately—the contempt in his tone had stung her to the quick—'stop! if you wish me to listen to you.'

'You shall do that, at least,' he answered. 'You shall hear me out before I go. Do you know what you have done? You have taught me in I know not what devilish caprice, to believe a lie—to worship, to long for, to live for it. You have weke in me hopes—wild, maddening

hopes—only to blast them at the last—passions, that tear and rend and sear, only to make mock at them—a love that a man knows but once in his life, only to murder it with a poisoned word. And all this for pastime.'

'Well?' she said, mockingly still, though her lip trembled, and the red rose her fingers were trifling with escaped them, and fell to the ground.

'As easy to blight and crush the love and the life of a man as to crush this, doubtless,' he went on, putting his heel upon the flower at his feet; 'but did it never strike you it might be dangerous sometimes? that some of us don't take the operation so quietly as others you have known?'

The vague, fierce menace in his angry eyes was unpleasant even for so practised a hand as Valérie to meet. The terrible constraint Molyneux was evidently keeping on himself did not reassure her either.

Instinctively she drew back from him.

'Don't be afraid!' he muttered, with a low, harsh laugh. 'I can master myself yet, though not for long. You have tried me hardly—more hardly, perhaps, than you would have thought wise if you had known me better. But I had better leave you. And you and I are not likely to see each other's face again.'

'My God!' he burst out suddenly, in his mad anguish, 'to leave you thus! I, who have hungered for you through long days and nights—I who love you, Valérie—who love you! I cannot!'

With a swift, sudden motion, ere she had time to move or cry, he had caught her in those strong arms of his, and, in a desperate embrace, crushed her against his breast. She felt his burning lips pressed on hers in one long, fierce kiss—felt him put her from him; and then knew that he had left her, and she was alone.

CHAPTER III.

FLUNG AWAY.

The summer of another year had come and gone.

Here, in the dense, dank Virginian woods, the autumn leaves are glowing blood-red in the rays of the dying sun.

Many a long league of salt sea lies between us and the English woodlands at home, where, to-day, while they knocked over 'rocketers,' or killed right and left, as the birds whirled out of the 'warm corner,' men who had known 'The Bey' in the old time had never a thought to waste upon him now—whose deadly skill had time and often brought grins of silent approval on the gnarled and wrinkled visages of grey-haired keepers at Longleat or Savernake.

He had dropped out of men's minds as he had dropped out of their world. His disappearance had been a nine-days' wonder, and then they had forgotten him as we all forget and are forgotten.

He had told Valérie the truth; they were, indeed, not likely to look upon each other's face again.

And, when he had gone from her, she knew he was as far beyond reach as the wild hawk that has burst its bondage. They two had met and parted for the last time.

Where he was, not even those of us whom he trusted most could even guess. It was not till later, when Brankston brought back the news, that we knew how it had fared with the man whose love and whose life The Vavasour had flung away.

Before the roses had withered that year, the 'Eugénie'—swiftest and most successful of blockade-runners—had landed Molynaux at Charleston.

There was wild work preparing then, for those were the days when the 'blue flag' waved proudly over the victorious Southerners, and Lee and Jackson were rolling back the tide of invasion, and the Federal retreat was like to become a rout; and they welcomed a leader like 'The Bey' among them eagerly enough.

They gave him the command he asked for—an Irregular Virginian Cavalry Corps, nominally attached to Gilmore's division.

But, after his first exploit, a midnight dash across the border and

the smiting asunder of an advancing Federal column, they left him to himself, and 'The Bey' cut out his own work.

The foe soon learned to dread the very mention of his name, as, in the days gone by, Cossack and Russian had done. When they thought him miles away—when their spies had reported him killed, wounded, a prisoner—when he had been unheard of for days, and they were hoping they were rid of him at last, he would come swooping down on them with his resistless rush—the hoarse yell of his pitiless troopers, as they charged, the only warning of his coming. 'Swift to smite and never to spare,' he did such service in the lost cause he had drawn the sword for, as men on both sides talk of yet.

As the Osmanli troopers had followed him straight and unswerving, when he led them through the withering hail-storm of shot and shell, down on the broken foe, his stalwart Virginians, striking hard and mercilessly for all they loved and all they had lost, rode behind him now.

He led them as they had never been led before.

So cool, so calm, when the peril was deadliest; so patient, so untiring in pursuit; so carelessly reckless when the right moment came, and men and horses, straining like hounds in the leash might be let slip at last; and the stretching gallop of his gallant English hunter was bringing him down, six lengths a head of his squadron, first on the reeling Northern line, 'The Bey' got the work of Paladins out of his men by the sheer force of his own example.

They never knew, when they saw the 'light of battle' gleam upon his face, just before he took them into fire, why the most desperate service in a cause that was not his, came ever most welcome to their leader. They were fighting for the land of their birth and the women of their love; he, as it seemed to them, for a soldier's love of the thing alone.

None there knew how the haunting vision of a woman's face, scornful and blighting in its beauty as he

had seen it last, ever before his eyes now, was driving him to fling down in honour the weary burden of his life. None knew how, when the fight was ended, and scathless, as though he bore a charmed life, he rode out of the *mêlée*, he envied, in the bitterness of his soul, the dead that were at peace, lying on the bloody, trampled sod, with white, calm faces, in their last sleep, slain outright by shot or steel that ever passed *him* by. It haunted him like a curse—the memory of the woman he had loved with the great love of his whole life. He saw her in her fatal beauty, mocking, pitiless, maddening, ever, ever before him—his evil angel, that, in bright noontide, or cold dead night—in the midst of the men he led, or when he sat alone by the waning bivouac-fires, as the last stars were paling before the dawn, stood by him still.

Only in the mad excitement of a headlong charge; in desperate fighting against heavy odds, when he and the Anakim who followed him had to hew and slash their way out of the bristling square they had pierced in their first rush—only when, right and left of him men went down beneath the sway of his sabre and 'Red Lancer's' trampling hoofs—only when the delirium of the battle field was on him could he forget her. Only then, and so, though day by day the ranks grew thinner and weaker, he had ever fresh work for his command to do.

Evil days for the overmatched Confederacy came at last—days of rebuke and blasphemy.

The Gettysburgh 'mistake' let in once more the fierce tide of invasion from the North. The Southern armies were falling back, fighting every inch of ground, to their last entrenchments.

'The Bey's' corps, separated by some leagues from its main supports, had got hemmed in by two Federal columns advancing by parallel routes to the front.

Between him and safety lay the heaviest—outnumbering him tenfold, and comprising two batteries of field artillery. The other was advancing slowly, but with grim

pertinacity, and closing in upon his flank and rear. He was caught, as it were, in a steel trap. Where he was now—on a long, level plateau, bordered on either side by the dense Virginian forest, through the rough tracks of which the Federal divisions were forcing their way—he had halted, as the autumn afternoon was closing in, to give men and horses breathing-time, ere he led them on to one last desperate struggle to wrench themselves free from the toils.

Desperate it was likely to be, he knew; and well-nigh hopeless. His only chance was to cut his way through the column in his front in one fierce, sudden rush, before the other had time to get up. That once done, he *might* reach the Confederate outposts with perhaps half his regiment. But the odds against him were very heavy—heavier than even those bold riders, whose ranks were sadly thinned now, but whose pluck and confidence in their chief were strong as ever, had faced before. If they failed they knew their fate; and this knowledge nerved every man to do or die. Better the sudden end by shot or steel than the long-drawn agony of death that awaited them yonder in the war-prisons of the North. While the girths were loosened, and, bridle in hand, the troopers sat or lay on the dry, short turf, waiting the word to mount, their leader, a little in advance, stood leaning his arm on 'Red Lancer's' shoulder, tranquilly finishing the *brûle-gueule* he was smoking. Where were his thoughts then? Far away across that war-scarred land, and the salt sea—far away from the End whose shadow was even then upon him—far away in the land he had left, with the woman he had loved. Once more her face rose up before him—that peerless face his eyes were wont to feast upon in bygone days, that seemed so long bygone—*her* face still, but not as he had seen it last, now. Out of the dark, deep eyes, the scornful mocking look that had once stung him to the soul had faded quite—'meek seemed the full lips,' and the pale features sorrowful, after a proudly repentant sort,

as though she were pleading silently with the man whom she had wronged so wantonly.

He saw this in the vision that passed before his eyes then, as clearly as though he had seen her face to face. And a keener pang, perhaps, than any she had cost him yet, wrung him with a new torture.

'Oh, Valérie!' his white lips muttered, 'my love, my love! If you loved me, after all?'

* * * *

Suddenly 'Red Lancer' snorts and pricks his ears. From out the dark woods yonder come a sharp, quick flash—a sharper report. Then another, and another. A moment more, and with a ringing cheer of defiance, the Virginian out-picket comes galloping in on the main body, not a saddle emptied.

The Federal column is upon them.

Almost before the word can be given, the ranks of troop and squadron are formed and close up. Brandon Raleigh, a boy-soldier, the pet of 'The Bey's' command, and the leader of the advanced party, makes his report in half a dozen words to his Chief, and falls back to his place at the head of his squadron.

The fire grows hotter as the long dark Federal line debouches from the woods which have masked their advance on to the plateau. Here and there in the stern, silent ranks, where, with desperate grip on pistol and sabre, the Southerners sit motionless on their horses, waiting for the word to charge, a trooper reels in his saddle and falls heavily on his charger's neck; for the hail of rifle-balls is beginning to tell. But 'The Bey,' in his place in the front, is waiting his time a while longer, yet.

It comes at last. With his back to the iron shower which hisses by him and tears up the turf at his horse's feet, he speaks some dozen words to his men in that tranquil, clear voice of his, which, for all the rattle of the musketry, every one of them can hear distinctly.

Then he wheels round 'Red Lancer' once more. 'Keep cool, keep straight, and keep together!' he says—'Now!'

And, through that deadly hail, the Virginian troopers ride straight upon the Northern line.

They crush and break it at the point which 'The Bey's' eye had marked as weakest, with the sheer impetus of their rush.

But all round them closes the steel trap—all round that little circle of horsemen, who have barely room to swing the sabres that must hew them their path through the bristling bayonets to safety and freedom.

Thrice 'The Bey' has almost cut his way out of the *mêlée*. Thrice the sheer weight of numbers has barred him back. Right and left of him the saddles are emptied, and, dealing their last bitter blow, the gallant Southerners go down one by one, dying hard, as hunted wolves die; but he is scathless still. Brandon Raleigh, wielding that heavy sabre in his woman's hand with such deadly skill, as he fights bridle to bridle with his chief, is wondering to himself how much longer this can last. The relics of the Southern corps are half-beaten by sheer fatigue, but 'The Bey's' arm never wearies, and, clear above the tumult and the din, his men hear that calm stern voice they know so well, bidding them close up and strike together. And, though all is hopeless, they obey him.

Not till 'Red Lancer,' wounded to the death, stumbles and falls,—not till the eagle's feather which the Southern Leader wears goes down, and, with his notched and crimsoned sabre broken in his fall, 'The Bey' lies at last under the thirsty bayonets and brandished musket-butts—not till then does the fight end. For then barely a score of Virginians are left in their saddles.

* * * *

Not dead, quite; but with his life going from him fast.

They had carried him—Brandon Raleigh and his own men—when the fight was done, with what care and gentleness they could, to the ruined and deserted farm-house where the Federal Commander had established his temporary headquarters, in a swoon that was like death itself. What a Yankee army surgeon could do for him was done

then, and 'The Bey' recovered consciousness once more. But those bayonet-thrusts he had received when he lay under the trampling hoofs, disarmed and defenceless, were beyond healing, the medico said, with a grim shaking of his head, as he hurried off to look to the wounded among his own people.

'The Bey' lay on a heap of bloody straw where they had placed him, with Raleigh kneeling beside him; speechless for a while, and with closed eyes.

Their guard had left them together, touched with a kind of rough pity for the boy's sorrow for his chief. The gallant young Virginian had worshipped Molyneux as a hero, and bent over him now tenderly and compassionately as a woman. For a long while nothing broke the silence in the dismantled chamber where they were but the low, faint breathing of the dying man. Presently his eyes unclosed; and, with what strength he had husbanded till then, 'The Bey' spoke at last. First, a soldier's question—How it had gone with them? The old battle-light gleamed in his glazing eyes once more as Raleigh answered him.

'We rode straight, I think,' he said; 'you will tell them that, Brandon, when you get your exchange.' Then there was another silence. And then, with the End so close

upon him, 'The Bey' said words to his companion which Brandon Raleigh never told of when he told his story, months later, to Brankston. Except these, that were the last that human ears heard from Wilfred Molyneux's lips.

Under the grey fighting-jacket he wore lay a breastknot of crimson riband—stained, now, here and there, with a deeper dye—a breastknot that had been a gage from Valérie Vavasour in the days past. He held it in his hand now. And there came a smile on this man's ashy lips none ever saw there before—a smile that transfigured the pain-wrung, war-worn face, even while the shadow of the coming Death lay upon it, as he said:

'Tell him to give her this, from me; and say, that, before all, beyond all, through all, I loved her.'

Brankston brought back his message and his story to England, by-and-by.

Save by some few of us 'The Bey,' lying far away in his nameless grave, with the tall Virginian grasses waving over him, is forgotten.

Forgotten, perhaps, even by her.

The Vavasour's face tells no tales; and, people say, if he comes out of this Continental war an 'Eligible' still, she means to marry Prinz Carl.

'Rux.'

THE OLD STORY.

I WAS a woman, and ~~Full~~ a heart,
And I raved of love and of constancy,
And he saw the tears to my eyelids start,
For he was the world to me!

He whisper'd low when the spring-time flew,
Of the tangled paths in which men stray,
And around me all his arms he threw,
His eyes were on fire that day.

We parted: yes! but I clung to him,
And I put up my lips to be kissed again;
But the laughing eyes of the heav'n grew dim,
And were swollen black with rain.

They came to me when my love was gone,
And said he was poor and toiled for bread;
They talk'd of ruin and tears alone,
And my heart was dull as lead.

And then they laid their bribes at my feet,
'Twas the same old tale that is often told;
They play'd on the strings of my heart's conceit,
And dazzled my eyes with gold.

I sold myself to a loveless thing,
And I walk'd to the altar and there I lied;
For my heart was away with the primrose-spring,
And I by my husband's side.

And now you ask me what of the life?
I've paid full dear for my girlish greed;
'Twere better, I think, for a woman to die,
Than to live the life I lead.

I am alone, but still I can sing,
And pray for the ruin of winter's rain,
For the scent of the primrose-crown of spring
Will return to me again.

C. W. S.

MY SCHEHERAZADE.

LONG weeks of weariness and pain,
 Long lapses of disordered dream,
 And life is come to me again,
 Delicious to the verge of pain,
 In utter ecstasy supreme.

Mis doubting all that I behold,
 I wander through the autumn days,
 Strange splendour brightens hill and wold,
 The woods are luminous with gold,
 The skies with beauty are ablaze.

And, like the spirit of the scene,
 So fair, I shrink as half afraid,
 One wanders by my side, serene,
 In perfect gracefulness of mien,
 My darling—my Scheherazade.

And as the golden, glimmering eyes
 Deepen about us, oft we gain
 A trellised bower round which there weaves
 A tangle of the wine-red leaves,
 Wine-red as reddest wine may stain.

Then at my knees, with winning grace,
 She sits,—her hair before me bright,—
 And, marble-white, her clear-cut face
 Gleams, till as darkness comes apace,
 It glimmers to a spot of light.

And ever as we sit she strives
 My languid fancy to beguile
 With talk of great, of noble lives,
 With tale, or legend, that revives
 And cheers my drooping heart the while.

The bright creations of romance,
 The memories of vanished time,
 These seem to quicken in her glance,
 But most my soul she will entrance,
 With old-world witcheries of rhyme.

High aims and honourable deeds
 Shaped on her lips my heart will move,
 For sin and suffering she pleads;
 But ever shuns the way that leads
 Toward the precipice of love!

That way the rosy pathways tend
 Meandering ever as they go,
 Where'er our devious course we wend
 Love with each tender thought will bleed,—
 And wherefore should she say it 'No'?

For very pity she is torn,
 The tear-drops glisten on her cheek;
 She pities and she does not scorn,
 Yet out of pity love is born,
 And still of love she does not speak!

Strange! yet, in sooth, far more I prize
 The gentle form that shrinks dismayed:
 Straight to my hungering heart she flies,
 For her alone it beats or dies,
 My darling—my Scheherazade!

W. B.

LONDON SOCIETY.

DECEMBER, 1866.

SOMETHING TO MY ADVANTAGE.

A Story in One Chapter.

minster. At all events, the Westminster Smiths, with whom our relationship was almost a tradition, for that branch of the family had long been settled there, and we of the country had not seen the town for two generations, while it was almost as long since Westminster had come down to Devonshire—well, I was going to say, that these unseen, unknown city cousins of ours—though at other times we heard little of them—always responded gratefully and speedily on receipt of the hampers, which twice in the year, for as long as I can remember, and a great deal longer, too, I dare say, it was the custom of us Devonshire Smiths to send them. There was the Midsummer hamper and the Christmas hamper. No matter what commonly filled the former, it was the Christmas hamper I was now packing, and its contents I have already told you.

The best and safest way of packing eggs is to wrap each one separately in paper, and as you put them in the hamper, to fill up the crevices with straw, or, better still, shreds of paper. Of all the hundreds I sent, never was a single egg of my packing known to break on the long journey to Westminster, as our cousins testified with wondering admiration.

Well, I had just torn off a piece of newspaper wherewith to enfold the egg I had in my hand, when the paragraph I have already transcribed caught my eye, riveted my attention, and caused me to suspend operations entirely. Suspend operations!—it made me do worse than that—made me drop the egg in my hand, which immediately smashed on the floor. No matter, it was only the stone floor of the kitchen, where it would do no harm, though even had it been on the new Brussels carpet in the parlour, I don't think that I should have heeded it. My thoughts had flown far away beyond the consideration of eggs or of carpets, and, unlike Alnaschar, that unlucky downfall did not rouse me from the vision of my dream.

'Christina Smith'—that was my name, as it had been my mother's before me. There were many Smiths

in the world; in my own brief and narrow experience I knew of many who were nothing akin to us. But Christina, that name was unique in our village, and since my mother died, I did not believe there lived another Christina Smith either there or anywhere beyond it. In that case the paragraph must be addressed to me. But Messrs. Rudge and Finch, how should they ever have heard of me—poor little rustic me! Much more likely, it seemed, that I should have heard of them, eminent London attorneys, yet I never had. Their eminence was, by the way, *pur et simple* the gift of my own brain. Then, how should I get to these gentlemen? 'Apply in person,' the advertisement said. Here was I, living with Aunt Sarah, all by myself, nearly two hundred miles away from London, how should I manage to go there? I, who had never been out of my native Devonshire all my life. Yet, on the other hand, how, having heard of that something to my advantage, how could I keep away? With the wondrous, the infinite grace of the unknown, that something enchanted and dazzled my view. Did it mean wealth? and how much? Enough for my fancy to build, without the help of genii, a palace beautiful as Aladdin's. I had read with delight the 'Arabian Nights,' and they were always a ready book of reference for my day-dreams.

Though I had never seen, of course I had dreamt of my fairy prince before now. I was nineteen years old. Eggs and poultry, the matter-of-fact realities of my everyday life, the absolute seclusion of our pretty cottage home, embosomed in its shade of trees, none of these things had sufficed to shut out the vision. My prince was not, however, like my palace, after the copy of Aladdin. I had always rather objected to the tailor parentage of that hero, as well as a few other things. But the ideal prince would be sure to come to the ideal palace, and ideal happiness would follow in his train, not for myself only, but for everybody I loved.

'Something to my advantage.' Again I read the advertisement on

the piece of torn newspaper, and had just decided to carry it to Aunt Sarah, and hear what she would say about it, when Martha came into the kitchen. Martha was our maid-of-all-work, a good honest soul as ever was, but plain in person, plain and practical, too, in mind. She was young—almost as young as I was—but I do not believe she had ever dreamt of a prince, or even of an ideal butcher, baker, or farmer's man. She was fond of me, though, and I thought I would tell my good fortune to her before I went to Aunt Sarah. Martha's eye had lighted at once on the broken egg on the kitchen floor.

'Yes, I did it; but never mind, Martha, you can get a cloth and wash it away, and the floor will be no worse, and eggs will soon be as cheap as dirt to us, so it doesn't matter for one broken.'

'Lor, miss,' said Martha, staring, 'then you won't be for sending any more on 'em to London town. Folks don't reckon much of presents that's no better nor dirt to them as sends 'em.'

This was not worth a reply.

'Read that, Martha,' I said, giving her the paper; but she blundered so in her spelling after she had passed the familiar letters of my name, that I snatched it away impatiently, and read it myself aloud. 'There, what do you think of that?' There was triumph in the tone of my question, but Martha's reply dashed it just a little.

'Think, Miss Chrissy! why I think as I should like to punch that Mr. Rudge's head for him, if only I could get a sight of him. Why couldn't he write you a proper letter, and send it by the post, like honest folk does, if he had anything to say, instead of putting your name in the newspaper for all the world to stare at, like that?' Martha never doubted the advertisement was meant for me, that was pleasant hearing for me in the midst of her indignant burst. 'I like his impudence,' she finally concluded.

'But, Martha, if Mr. Rudge didn't know my address, how could he write to me by the post?'

'Then he might let it alone; you

don't know him, and if he knows so little of you, how should he be for knowing anything to your advantage?'

'But suppose somebody has left me a fortune, Martha?'

Martha shook her head in solemn warning.

'Oh, Miss Chrissy, don't you be for trusting and going after that bad man. The parson preached the other day about wolves in sheep's clothing, and it's my belief this here Mr. Rudge is one of them there wicked creatures.'

'Well, Martha, I'm going to tell Aunt Sarah all about it, and you may be sure I sha'n't do anything she doesn't approve.' And I left the kitchen, and went my way to the parlour as I spoke.

Dear Aunt Sarah! There she sat in her old arm-chair by the fire, her knitting in her hand, whence she looked up, smiling her own bright smile on me as I entered. Such a dear aunt she was. She had never been married, and she was nearly fifty years old; but she wasn't the least like an old maid, not the least bit fussy or fidgetty, or prim, or cross-grained; she was gentle and forbearing, not to my shortcomings only, but to those of the whole world; she had a sweet, loving temper, and was altogether more like an angel than any one I have ever seen. She was sweet-looking, too, quite lovely, I thought, with her small, delicate features, and neat figure, always so exquisitely though so plainly dressed; her loveliness was not in the least impaired to my eyes by the look of habitual ill-health on her face, and the silver threads that mingled thickly with her soft brown hair. She had been more than a mother to me since I lost my own when I was hardly ten years old, and before that I seemed to have two mothers, for Aunt Sarah had always lived with us; the two were much alike, and I scarcely knew then which was dearest. My father had died when I was a baby, and I was an only child, so now Aunt Sarah and I lived alone together, and were all in all to each other. We were poor, but had enough for our simple wants in the

cottage which was our own—enough and to spare—for besides the half-yearly hampers we sent to the Smiths of Westminster, and to some others in our own rank of life, there were those in the village poorer than ourselves, who blessed Aunt Sarah's charity not once in the half-year, but every day of the year.

Well, then, Aunt Sarah looked up and smiled at my entrance.

'Is the hamper packed already, Chrissy?' she said.

'No, auntie, dear; I came in because I've something to show you,' and I gave her the piece of the newspaper. Aunt Sarah took her spectacles from her pocket; her dear eyes had been failing the last year or two; she could knit, but not read without glasses. She had soon adjusted them, and glanced through the few lines of the advertisement; but she did not speak immediately. At length, almost with a sigh, she said—

'We have been very happy always, Chrissy, haven't we? It is not the richest people who are the happiest, dear child. I don't think I would wish for riches for you. But this mayn't be riches, it may be only a little lent you by the good God to do good with. The advertisement may not be addressed to you, but Christina is not a common name, and I think we ought to inquire. I will write to our cousins at Westminster—it will not be much trouble for them to go to Mr. Rudge's office.'

'Oh, Aunt Sarah, but it says Christina Smith is to apply in person. Couldn't I go to London myself?'

I was amazed at my own temerity, and Aunt Sarah gazed at me with as much wonder as if I had proposed a journey to the moon—the one seemed to her almost as impracticable as the other. True, we had both of us been to Exeter more than once, and there was railroad all the way from Exeter to London; but Aunt Sarah had never travelled by railroad in her life, had never trusted me to do so; in her young days there had been no such mode of transit: railroads, balloons, and M. Blondin's feats on the tight-

rope, they were all fraught with strange peril in her imagination.

'I fear not, my darling. I would take you indeed if I could, but you know the doctor told me to avoid all excitement, and I'm afraid the journey would be too much for me. I must take care of my poor health for your sake, Chrissy, till you have somebody else to take care of you.'

How could Aunt Sarah think I would be so selfish? I would not have had her go for the world. But I was young and strong—I should not be afraid even of the railway with its great rampant fire engine, and I had been thinking——. By degrees I unfolded my plan. Farmer Mallard would drive me to Exeter; there were the Bensons there, kind friends with whom Aunt Sarah and I had both stayed before; they would be so glad to give me a bed for the night; they would take me to the railway station the next morning, see me safely into the train, and I should reach London before dark, even though the time was Christmas, and the days were short. And would not the Westminster Smiths meet me there at the station, and let me stay with them for a week? A week would be quite sufficient time to settle all my business with Messrs. Rudge and Finch—how important I felt as I uttered these words—and not long enough for dear Aunt Sarah to feel lonely, and miss me much. The Westminster Smiths had always written such kind letters on receipt of the hampers, and manifested such warm interest in their dear cousin Christina, I thought they would only be too glad to have a week's visit from her. I had run on so fast that Aunt Sarah had not been able to get a word in, but as she noted my eagerness, her face had changed, and I saw I should persuade her according to my wish. I had told Martha I should not do anything Aunt Sarah did not approve—ah! but didn't Martha and I both know she never in all her life refused her approval to anything on which I set my heart, when it was not absolutely wrong? And there was no wrong in my going to London.

Aunt Sarah demurred a little at

first to my staying a week with the Westminster Smiths; they might not like it, and could not well refuse, if she asked it as a favour. And she didn't like asking favours of people without being able to make them some return. I suggested the hampers might be looked upon as a return, and we might send them oftener, one again in the spring, instead of waiting till midsummer. But aunt said she could not look upon the hampers in that light, they were only by way of keeping up the family feeling and immemorial custom. And then a bright idea struck her.

'Suppose, Chrissy,' she said, 'that when I write to propose that you should spend a week at Westminster, I were to invite one of our cousins to return with you to visit us in Devonshire. The last letter said Eliza Jane was delicate. I am sure our pure country air would be of service to her; for my own part I wonder how delicate people can live at all in the heart of a horrible great city. Yes, I will invite Eliza Jane—I believe she is the one who is just of your age, Chrissy.'

I agreed cordially in the invitation to Eliza Jane. 'And you'll write to-morrow, auntie, dear? And when may I go? I should like the hamper to arrive before me to prepare my way.'

'My dear, don't impute interested motives to your cousins, of which they are probably incapable. I feel sure they will love you for yourself when they come to know you. Yes, I'll write by to-morrow's post, and you shall go—let me see—I should like you to spend Christmas-day at home with me—suppose you start on the 27th—that is if we hear they can do with you at Westminster?'

How good Aunt Sarah was to me! I knew how she would miss me during that one short week—me, who had never been separated from her for a single day before; I knew how she would magnify and dread for me the dangers, real or imaginary, of the journey, yet she said not one word further against it, but on the contrary with her sweet smiling face did all she could to help me on my way. I told her what Martha

had said, and she laughed at poor Mr. Rudge being so arbitrarily turned into a wolf.

'I dare say he's a very worthy man, my dear,' said Aunt Sarah. 'Knowledge about property and things of that sort comes in the way of their business to lawyers, and it's quite a common thing, I believe, to advertise in the newspapers for the persons who have a claim, whom, indeed, they could address in no other way, being ignorant of their place of residence.'

One more request I urged on Aunt Sarah.

'You won't tell them at Westminster why I want to go to London, only say I have some business to settle, let me tell my own story when I get there. I must tell Martha to be silent too.'

And Aunt Sarah promised it should be in this also as I wished; and then I kissed her, and thanked her many times, before I ran away to finish packing my hamper.

The hamper was despatched, the letter written and posted the next day. In due time came the answer. The Westminster Smiths praised the quality of goose and turkey, butter and eggs, and were profuse in their thanks to the donors. They thought it very friendly, too, of Cousin Chrissy that she should propose to come and see them; a warm welcome was awaiting her, and they hoped she would find she liked them well enough to stay longer than a week. If she would say what time she would leave Exeter, father would know when the train reached London, and would meet it on arrival. Perhaps, also, Cousin Chrissy would be so good as to give some description of herself or the dress she wore, to be a sort of guide to father in the large London station where so many people were for ever coming and going. For similar help to Cousin Chrissy the writer added—father was short and stout, wore a grey overcoat, had a red face and no whiskers. Then followed many thanks for the invitation to Eliza Jane, who was, indeed, as usual, far from well; and the doctor said change of air was all she wanted; but Eliza Jane was

shy of strangers, so perhaps it would be better to leave arranging about her visit to Devonshire until she had seen her Cousin Chrissy.

Such was the sum and substance of the letter. It could not have been kinder. No impertinent curiosity was betrayed as to the nature of my business, it was never so much as named. The thought struck me that very possibly my cousins imagined it a mere ruse and pretext, and that my journey was undertaken simply that I might see them, and the great city where they lived. What more likely than such a wish on my part? What more unlikely than that a girl of nineteen—they knew my age, it having been some time ago by letter compared and found to be the same as Eliza Jane's—what more unlikely than that I should have business in London? Yet, likely or not, I had—hadn't I?

The letter could not have been kinder, I have said; yet a very short time after I had read it, Aunt Sarah remarked I was looking unusually grave, and asked me the reason. I blushed, and hesitated.

'I was only thinking—only hoping that all my cousins would not be short and stout, and have red faces,' I said at length.

Aunt Sarah laughed.

'Oh, that was it, was it, Chrissy? We may hope that Eliza Jane at least will be an exception, as she is delicate. By the way, how will you describe yourself, my dear?'

And Aunt Sarah looked at me with such peculiar meaning in her eyes, that I felt myself blush still deeper as I replied—

'I shall leave that for you to do, Aunt Sarah. You wrote the first letter, and you must write this one too.'

And she did so.

Christmas-day came and went. A glorious day it was—not a cloud flecking the brilliancy of the clear blue sky. Aunt Sarah and I walked between hedgerows where the bright holly berries grew thickly on both sides of us, to morning service at the church, which art had decorated almost as luxuriantly, if less tastefully, perhaps, with the same colours

of red and green. We joined with our good clergyman in the thanksgiving of universal Christendom; then we walked home by the same way we had come, and spent the rest of the happy day alone together. Never was Christmas-day before that Aunt Sarah had been so cheerful, so merry, though I was to leave her the day after the morrow, for the first time in my life. It was she who kept up my flagging spirits, for now the time drew so near, I began to feel rather frightened and nervous, not of any fancied terrors of the journey, but of the strange men and women at the end of it.

The next day my box was packed; I put all my best things into it, for I did not want Westminster to be ashamed of its country cousin; and at the bottom of the box lay the certificate of my baptism, which it was Aunt Sarah's thought I should take, to prove to Messrs. Rudge and Finch the truth of my pretension to be called Christina Smith. Mr. Hunter, our clergyman, had manifested a little curiosity when it had been requested of him, but Aunt Sarah had managed to satisfy him without revealing what I was so anxious to keep a secret.

Then came the day of my departure, and the hour when Farmer Mallard drew up in his dog-cart before our door. Aunt Sarah kissed me fondly, and whispered to me just at the last not to stay much longer than a week if I could help it. And I shook hands with Martha, and bade her not think of me as another little Red Riding Hood going into the forest, otherwise the city, to be eaten by a wolf, for Martha's looks were uncommonly lugubrious.

My boxes—I had two—were hoisted into the cart, I was helped by Farmer Mallard to my own seat at his side, and the next minute we were off. I looked back to wave a last farewell to Aunt Sarah and Martha, still standing at the gate. Farmer Mallard drove fast, and the bay mare was a good one; in another minute 'the Nest'—so we called our pretty home—was completely out of sight, but I could

still hear the loud, vehement adieux of Rover, our dog. By the time his voice had died away in the distance we were in the village, where almost every house turned out one or more men, women, or children, smiling, curtsying, touching hat or cap in greeting, for every one knew of my journey, and it was quite an event to them. London was such a long way off, and such a wonderful place in the village mind.

Exeter itself was thirty miles off, so we had a long drive before us, Farmer Mallard and I together. We had not much to say to each other, though our hearts were full of good will. As we passed from the known into the further and less familiar country, I made a few remarks on its aspect, with which my companion always agreed. It was a fine, bright day, but the air was sharp, and he was constantly hoping I did not feel cold, and heaping rugs and all kinds of wraps around me to prevent it. Sometimes, too, he ventured what he considered a good-humoured joke, likely to please me.

'I don't expect as I shall ever have the pleasure of driving you back from Exeter, Miss Chrissy.'

'Oh yes, I hope you will in a week, Farmer Mallard. I shouldn't like to leave Aunt Sarah for longer.'

But the farmer smiled, shook his head, and said—'Ah! but I shouldn't wonder if they know a rose when they see one in London even. Maybe there'll be some one who won't be for letting you come back.'

'Nobody should keep me against my will,' I said, stoutly.

'But there's no knowing,' he proceeded; 'perhaps you'll like the citizens, when you see them, better than us country bumpkins. I hope not though,' he added; 'for there's no manner of doubt the country's the best for the roses themselves—they'll soon fade and grow pale in the town.'

The vision of my cousin of Westminster with the red face, as he had been described to me, here crossed my mind, but I did not communicate that fact to Farmer Mallard, though it might have convinced

him there were exceptions to his rule of town pallor.

We were now rapidly approaching Exeter; the picturesque suburban villas, sparsely scattered at first, became more and more frequent, until at length we were rattling through the streets, passing shops that riveted all my attention; those of London surely could hardly be more magnificent.

The Bensons lived out of the way of the shops, in a more retired part of the town. They received me very kindly, extending also their welcome to Farmer Mallard, as a friend and benefactor of mine, though he was personally unknown to them. It was too far to drive sixty miles in one day; indeed the farmer had too much regard for his favourite mare to have intended such a thing; but his idea of putting up at an hotel until the morning was so decisively negatived by the hospitable Bensons, that he was forced to yield and accept the shelter of their roof and partake of the fruit of their vine.

We spent a pleasant evening, at least I can answer for myself: I am not sure the farmer felt quite at his ease among these town-bred strangers. The Miss Bensons had been in London more than once, and very kindly wrote down for me a list of all the most wonderful sights, which I must on no account neglect to see. I must stay a night with them on my return, and entertain them with an account of my visit. I said hesitatingly, perhaps my cousin Eliza Jane, might be with me, we had invited her to come and stay with us. Whereupon the friendly Bensons declared they should be delighted to see Eliza Jane for my sake, as, indeed, any or all the Smiths of Westminster. I thought to myself in that case their house should be made of India-rubber, for these Smiths were a family of ten, without reckoning father and mother, both of whom were living. But with many thanks I promised for myself and Eliza Jane. Then Farmer Mallard must come also, to be ready to drive us home again the next day. And the farmer bowed, and thanked, and promised too.

When this had been settled we all

went to bed. Directly after breakfast the next morning, Farmer Mallard took his departure, and about half an hour later the Miss Bensons, with their father, accompanied me to the railway station.

Mr. Benson took my ticket for me—a second-class ticket, for I would not let my journey cost more than I could help; but if that ‘something to my advantage’ turned up all right, I had whispered to Aunt Sarah I would come back enthroned on cushions, in the first-class, like any grand lady of them all. Mr. and the Miss Bensons looked into all the second-class carriages, and made inquiry of their occupants; it seemed, however, there was nobody going through to London in any carriage that was not full already. The Bensons regretted this; but I had no thought of any possible danger of being left by myself in the carriage, and quite contentedly took my seat beside two very respectable looking old ladies, who were going some distance, they said, and would be glad to see me so far. A few last words with the Bensons at the window, then the shrill whistle sounded and we were off.

How nice it was! Such smooth rapid progress! I had thought Farmer Mallard drove fast, but the pace was nothing to this, and I liked the railroad the best of the two. I suspect it was the novelty of the thing influenced my decision, for now that I am more used to railway travelling I have changed my mind. Then, however, I found the railroad charming. The Miss Bensons had given me a book, a most delicious novel, they said, but I couldn’t read a word of it. It was far greater pleasure to sit watching the flying fields, trees, and hedgerows, the numberless villages and towns, the cattle which started at our approach. I told the two old ladies I had never been on the railroad before, and they seemed to enjoy my delight.

Then there was the excitement of watching the people who got in and out at the various stations. At length we stopped at one larger and more bustling than any we had yet passed, and the door of our carriage was opened to admit a passenger.

The new-comer was a young gentleman. Perhaps he was not exactly handsome, but he had a face that pleased me, so bright and ingenuous looking. The old ladies eyed him narrowly, at first, as it appeared, with some suspicion, which, however, they could not maintain more than a few seconds, then they smiled, and looked as serene and contented as before.

At this station we had been asked to show our tickets, and it was some little time before I thought of returning mine to its former place of security in my purse. As I did so I observed the writing on it for the first time.

‘Dear me,’ I exclaimed, in sudden distress, ‘they’ve given me a wrong ticket. This says Exeter to Paddington, and it’s London I want to go to. Whall *shall* I do?’

But the two old ladies laughed, and the young gentleman smiled such a pleasant smile, that it reassured me immediately.

‘It’s all right, my dear,’ said one of the ladies, as soon as she could speak for laughing. ‘There are a great many stations in London, and the one you will stop at is called Paddington.’ Then turning to the young gentleman, she added, ‘This young lady is going to pay her first visit to London.’

He smiled again. ‘I am going to London too,’ he said, in a voice that was as pleasant as his smile, ‘but I regret to say not for the first time.’

I was wondering why he should regret it, when he seemed to read my thought, and continued, ‘There is such pleasure in the freshness of the first time. London seemed such a grand place to me when I saw it first, and now by familiarity its magnificence is sadly lessened.’

I had been brought up in the idea that it was not proper for a young girl to enter into conversation with a stranger, a gentleman, who had not been introduced to her, of whose name and station she was ignorant. Yet that circumstances altered cases I had heard also; was not the presence of these two old ladies a sufficient safeguard? They would check me if they considered I was not behaving properly, and I

thought I should like to speak to the young man, who was looking towards me, and who had spoken so pleasantly. So I ventured, with some timidity, to tell him what I had before told the ladies, that it was not only my first visit to London, but that it was the first time I had ever been on the railroad. 'And I like it so much,' I concluded. And the ladies did not check me, but, on the contrary, looked quite pleased with me, and with the young man, too, as he smilingly answered me—

'Indeed. And I have known more of railroads than of anything besides all my life; for my father is an engineer employed in their construction, and I am learning the same business.' And then he told us where was his home, and how he was now going to spend a fortnight's holiday with an uncle and cousins in the metropolis. And more pleasant conversation followed, until about an hour later, one of the ladies said to me—

'My sister and I are now nearly arrived at the end of our journey. We get out at——. I am quite sorry to say good-bye, but,' she added, addressing the young gentleman, 'I think we may trust you to take care of her.'

He looked very pleased, as he bowed, and said 'Thank you,—indeed you may, madam.'

Then the train stopped, and the ladies got out, with kind good-byes, and we two were alone in the carriage together. My companion's manner was even more respectful than before. No matter what we talked about—subjects did not fail us, and our *tête-à-tête* ran on pleasantly and uninterruptedly, till the train stopped again, and an old gentleman, with a very stern, cross face took his seat in our carriage. He took out a newspaper immediately. We dropped our voices almost to a whisper, that we might not disturb his reading, yet I noticed that he often glanced at us over the corners of the paper, and that when he did so his face was sterner than ever, and seemed intended to reprove us. But we did not much heed his reproof, we had

done no wrong, and felt no repentance. Besides, who made him a ruler over us?

Presently the train stopped at Reading.

'Only thirty miles to London now,' said my companion; he said it in a tone of regret, as if he would be sorry when the journey came to an end. Perhaps my face told him I was sorry too, for I did feel sorry in my heart; there was no impatience there to meet the short, stout, red-faced cousin in the grey coat, who would be waiting for me at Paddington; and as for that 'something to my advantage,' I could not clutch it on the instant, however impatient I might be.

The railway porter was now looking at our tickets—what was the matter that he should eye me so suspiciously?

'My ticket's all right?' I said, in a tone of some little resentment. The man laughed impertinently.

'Quite right,' he replied, 'and it strikes me I've about found the right ticket too.'

He closed the door again and disappeared. What did he mean? I looked inquiringly at my two travelling companions; the young one appeared as much surprised, and a good deal more indignant than myself, the elder neither surprised nor indignant, only very grave and severe. There had been time to look at all the tickets—why was not the train going on? I had hardly begun to be puzzled by this new wonder, when the door of our carriage was again thrown open, and the same porter showed himself, this time with two companions, evidently railway officials also, of higher rank than himself.

'I fear I am under the necessity of stopping your journey, young lady,' one of them said to me. 'Will you be good enough to alight?'

'But why?' I asked, in utter amazement. 'I wish to go to London. I am expected there.'

'No doubt,' was the cool reply; 'but it is my duty to prevent it.'

His duty! How could that be? I had, indeed, had no previous experience of railway travelling, but I could not think passengers were

liable to be stopped without being told the reason why, at any moment, against their will.

I must be dreaming, surely, or this could not be civilized England. The proceeding was uncommonly like what I had imagined of a set of lawless banditti, though I did not think a bandit would talk about his duty—his royal will and pleasure, rather, it would be. This man was a hypocrite into the bargain.

‘I must repeat my request that you will leave the carriage,’ he went on, seeing that I did not move: ‘the train cannot be kept waiting any longer; some of the passengers are already very impatient.’

‘At least you will tell the young lady your reason for this strange behaviour,’ said the young gentleman—he had told me his name before this, and I will call him Mr. Meredith—whose indignation would no longer let him be silent.

‘I have very little doubt you know it as well as she does herself,’ the wretch laughed in reply. ‘Come, now, this won’t do,’ he added, as we both professed our utter ignorance, and he took a paper from his pocket, and gave it to Mr. Meredith.

My curiosity was not to be restrained; I looked over his shoulder, and this was what I read:

‘A hundred pounds reward. Whereas a young lady, aged 20, of prepossessing appearance, height, 5 feet 4 inches, dark-brown hair and eyes, fair and brilliant complexion, left her home on Wednesday, Dec. 27th: whoever is the means of restoring her to her distracted parents, shall receive the above reward. It is believed the young lady has made, or will endeavour to make, her way to London, probably by the Great Western Railway. She wore, on leaving home, a black silk dress, black velvet jacket, and hat with grey gull’s feather. It is not known that she has a companion in her flight. The address of the young lady’s friends can be ascertained immediately from Messrs. Cannon & Co., solicitors, Barnstaple, Devon.’

‘And you think I am that young lady? Indeed you are mistaken,’ I cried vehemently. ‘My home is in Devonshire, but nowhere near Barn-

staple; and, indeed, I have not run away from it. And I have no parents; and my friends will be greatly alarmed if I do not reach London this afternoon.’

‘You can send a telegram to your friends, if what you say is true; but the description agrees too exactly for us to lose sight of you. The young gentleman can proceed on his journey to London, and inform those by whom you are expected of the reason of your detention. We are not authorized to detain him also.’ The man smiled significantly as he spoke; he evidently doubted my being expected by anybody.

‘But he doesn’t know my friends,’ I said, anger and indignation waxing stronger every moment; ‘I never saw him before this morning.’

There was a still broader grin on the faces of the three railway officials, and the old gentleman with the severe face now for the first time let his yet severer voice be heard.

‘Then allow me to say’—it was me he addressed—‘allow me to say that your behaviour, so familiar and confidential, was highly indecorous. If it had been one of my own daughters, I should have thought no punishment too severe to inflict on such levity. But I cannot believe the story that you are strangers. I suspected an elopement from the first moment I entered the carriage.’

‘You are a wicked and cruel old man,’ I exclaimed, as my passionate tears broke forth like rain; ‘and I would a thousand times rather be the fatherless orphan I am, than have you for my father.’

‘Come, miss, don’t make a scene,’ the porter said, not unkindly; ‘it’ll do no manner of good, and you are really trying the passengers’ patience too far. If you won’t step out willingly, I shall have to carry you.’

Drying my tears as well as I was able, I did their bidding, and stepped on to the platform; but what was my surprise when I saw that Mr. Meredith had followed me.

‘It is of no importance that I should reach London to-day,’ he said. ‘I cannot leave you alone and unprotected. Those two good old ladies trusted you to my care, you

know, and I will be as good as my word; that is, if you will allow me to stay and look after you.'

'Oh! thank you,' I said warmly, for I felt so lonely and frightened that the idea of his friendly presence was an inexpressible relief; 'only,' I added afterwards, 'only will it not confirm their dreadful suspicions?'

'Never mind,' was his soothing reply; 'innocence like yours can afford to be suspected.'

The porters were now inquiring of me whether I had any luggage I should wish taken out of the train: they hurried me forward when I answered in the affirmative. My two modest boxes soon stood beside me on the platform, and again those horrid men smiled as one of them commented on the address.

'Miss Smith! That's a commonish name, isn't it?'

I took no apparent notice of his insolence, though I had difficulty in keeping back the tears from again starting to my eyes as they followed the train, which was now in motion. Another moment and it was out of sight. I was left behind unmistakably, in miserable uncertainty what was to be done with me, for so much at least was clear, I was no longer a free agent. The superior official, addressing me with far more respect and deference than his inferior had done, roused me from the reverie into which I had fallen by offering to conduct me to the telegraph office if I wished to communicate with my friends.

I stopped to consider. Would it not be better to leave Aunt Sarah in ignorance of what had befallen me? Better to let her lie down to rest that night in the happy, confident belief that I, at the same hour, was resting in peaceful security beneath my relatives' roof at Westminster, than to disturb her mind with horrible, nervous fears, to cause her to suffer anguish by a revelation of the truth? It would certainly make her ill, and she always so delicate. Besides, how could she help me? She could not herself come to me; what could she do? No; I decided to send no telegram to Aunt Sarah. Knowing my own integrity, I trusted

my journey could not be long tired layed, and that by to-morrow's evening post I might be able to write to her of my safe arrival in Westminster. Mr. Smith, however, must be communicated with. I consulted Mr. Meredith about the message. Together we entered the telegraph office, and together concocted one to the effect that Miss Christina Smith was unavoidably delayed, but hoped to reach London, if not by the same train, at all events by a later one, the following day. I added Mr. Smith's address at Westminster, and was assured he would receive it in the course of an hour at the latest, almost as soon as the train which should have landed me at Paddington could possibly arrive there.

The railway official—I will call him the superintendent—who had been confirmed in his previous doubts of me by my refusal to telegraph to my friends in Devonshire, my acknowledged home, was now again a little staggered by the apparent good faith of my inquiries. Yet it might all be a clever ruse; there might be no such person as this Mr. Smith at Westminster, or he might be the friend and accomplice of the partner in my flight; for that this young man who was so attentive, who seemed so wonderfully anxious for my comfort, and indignant in my behalf, was, as I stated, an utter stranger to me until that very morning, was past his, the superintendent's, belief. He took out, however, once again the notice he had returned to his pocket, and once more he read the description over aloud from beginning to end. I took courage from the slightly wavering voice, from the looks he from time to time directed towards me.

'Oh!' I said beseechingly, 'there are hundreds and thousands of young ladies with brown hair and eyes of my height and complexion. And the dress is not the same. My dress is black silk, but my jacket is cloth, and not velvet.' (No, indeed, I added mentally, how should I afford to buy velvet, unless, indeed, it were cotton velvet, and I preferred my own honest cloth to that.)

‘I went on aloud, ‘whether or not, that description was ever written for me; indeed, I am speaking the truth, and you will gain nothing by detaining me. Let me go on to London by the next train,’ was my concluding entreaty.

The individual I addressed hesitated a moment, but only for a moment; the very urgency of my entreaty defeated its own end.

‘No,’ he said; and there was now immovable decision in his tone; ‘it cannot be. I think little of the error about the velvet; such a trifling mistake is easily accounted for, and does not damage at all, to my mind, the striking accuracy of the whole. The down train to Exeter is due in little more than half an hour, and by it you must be prepared to travel. I shall accompany you myself. Whether you are or are not the person indicated in this handbill, we shall learn beyond a doubt to-night; and if you have spoken the truth, the company will place every facility in the way of your proceeding to London to-morrow, as early as you like. You see,’ he continued, ‘since the telegram is gone, your friends will no longer expect you to-day; and if I suffered you to proceed, you would most certainly be stopped at the terminus at Paddington, for these handbills, received by us about an hour ago, have been posted at all the stations, and in London doubtless numbers of the detective force are already on the alert. The wonder to me is that you have been allowed to proceed so far; there must have been very reprehensible carelessness somewhere. The notices must have been delivered at the stations down the line before they arrived here. Yes, it is a wonder you were ever allowed to leave Exeter, from which place I observed your ticket was taken.’

‘I was not alone there; I had friends to see me off; nobody would have dared to prevent me then,’ I said. It was, however, no use to argue further. I recognized that fact, and sadly made my way to the waiting-room, to sit there until the train should be signalled which was to take me back to Exeter.

Mr. Meredith tried all he could to raise my spirits. I can never be sufficiently grateful to him, though at the time I am afraid I appeared very ungrateful. I declined the refreshment he brought me. Not all his efforts at consolation could induce me to look up, nor his liveliest sallies bring a smile upon my face; yet all the time I felt his presence there a comfort.

At length the whistle sounded, the London down train came wheezing, puffing, blowing into the station. I travelled now in the company of his serene highness the superintendent, and it was, therefore, a first-class carriage which was opened for my reception, yet the superior state brought me very inferior enjoyment. Mr. Meredith was there, but he was silent. I made such feeble response to his attempts at conversation, that he soon desisted them altogether. Yet I knew he was thinking of me, for whenever I raised my eyes, I always caught his fixed on my face with such a tender, anxious, pitying expression.

I tried to read a little of Miss Benson’s delicious novel. Oblivion, and not pleasure, was what I sought for in its pages. I was growing very, very tired. At length, long after the short December day had quite closed in, and the darkness over the flying landscape was only broken by the flickering ray of the lamp on the roof of the carriage, I lay back my head, and fell asleep. A fitful sleep it was, that was broken by sudden jerks and noises, but still, by fits and starts, a sleep that lasted all the way to Exeter. I don’t know what o’clock it was when we got there. I seemed to be too sleepy to be conscious of anything, even of getting out of the train, until gradually it began to dawn upon me we were going a different pace; and rousing myself forcibly, I found myself driving through the night in a fly, with Mr. Meredith opposite and the superintendent at my side.

‘Where are we going now?’ was my puzzled question.

‘To Barnstaple,’ the superintendent answered.

‘Oh! we needn’t go there,’ I murmured; ‘I have friends at Exeter

who will tell you who I am and all about me.'

'You should have thought of that before, young lady,' he returned. 'We have come too far now to turn back, and I must satisfy my doubts at Barnstaple.'

To Barnstaple, accordingly, we went on, finding that little town, to all appearance, wrapped in deepest slumber when we reached it. The superintendent was as great a stranger in the place, knew as little of the residence of Messrs. Cannon and Co. as Mr. Meredith or I did. He professed not to credit our ignorance, but of course there was no making us speak against our will; and as he deemed that Messrs. Cannon and Co. would be probably sharing the sleep of their fellow-townsmen, and might possibly be averse to leaving their beds, even for the sake of the sooner restoring me to my distracted parents, he announced his decision to leave the matter till the morning, and in the mean time to seek rest at one of the hotels.

They were hard to rouse even at the hotel. Travellers did not often arrive at Barnstaple in the small hours of the night; but at length a sleepy ostler was found to take charge of horse and vehicle, and a chambermaid, also rubbing half-opened eyes, vouchsafed to conduct us superior animals to rooms inside.

Mine was not a very dainty chamber; it looked very seedy indeed by the light of next morning's sunshine, but at the time I first set foot in it I don't think I should have noticed any difference between an apartment fitted for a queen and one for a beggar. I had slept, it was true, a good deal on the journey down; but sleeping in a railway carriage is one thing, and in bed another, and I soon cast anchor in that latter haven for the weary, and was presently unconscious.

The next morning I was sensible of a wonderful rise in my spirits; I knew those distracted parents could not claim me, and that I should soon be on my return journey to London. True I had known this all along the day before; but things wear such a

different aspect when one is tired out by bodily fatigue, and when one has just risen refreshed from one's couch. I was as lively as a cricket—no, I retract that simile, for a cricket's liveliness is reserved for the evening—but I was as lively as you like at the breakfast table in the hotel coffee-room, Mr. Meredith ably supporting me; and it exhilarated me still more to perceive that, as my spirits mounted, those of Monsieur le Surintendant sank lower and lower, till he had scarcely a word to throw at a dog. He began to see he was in the wrong box, and that those hundred golden guineas were not for his handling. Well, then, after breakfast the fly soon transported all three of us to the residence of the Messrs. Cannon, who readily granted the interview we requested. As will have been imagined by the reader, they were well acquainted with the young lady whose elopement had caused such inexpressible grief to her family—a family of consequence in the neighbourhood—and I bore not the slightest resemblance to that young lady.

'Not the slightest resemblance! If you will be so good as to read over the description in the handbills, I think you must retract that assertion,' said the superintendent, in a more than slightly nettled tone.

'No,' replied Mr. Cannon, nothing daunted, 'the colour of the eyes and hair may be similar, and this young lady appears to be about the same age and of the same height as Miss —; but the rest of the features, the expression, and the general style are altogether different.' (He evidently meant to insinuate mine was a very inferior style; but I don't bear him any ill-will for that.) 'No one could see the two for an instant, and mistake them,' he concluded.

'You seem to forget, however, that I had not seen the two; and it might have been as well to put something about those "other features" into the description,' retorted the other, with increasing ill-humour.

A sharp battle of words lasted some minutes longer between the pair; but words spoken in haste should be forgotten at leisure, and I

will not do either the lawyer or my friend the superintendent the injustice of recording them.

We were soon in the fly once more, and on our way back again to Exeter. Mr. Superintendent, in spite of his ill-humour, did not omit to make a handsome apology to me for his mistake; and after we arrived at Exeter I saw no more of him; he did not again enter the same railway carriage as myself and Mr. Meredith. The latter was as agreeable a companion as he had been the day before. Indeed, by his agreeableness, his kindness, or by some nameless attraction, he so won my confidence that I could not resist telling him the story of that 'something to my advantage' which was taking me to London. I was a little disappointed that he was not more impressed by it.

'Don't raise your expectation too high, and try not to be disappointed if there should be another Miss Christina Smith after all. I think you could be happy without being rich,' he said.

'Oh, yes!' was my answer. 'Only for Aunt Sarah's sake I'm afraid I couldn't help feeling a little disappointed.'

He did not say much more about it; and so the day wore on, and we were rapidly nearing London. We had been too late at Exeter for the train by which I had travelled the day before, and the evening had now quite closed in. Would Mr. Smith be waiting for me at Paddington? I hoped so, but was not sure. I was beginning to feel very tired again and a little nervous. Before the train stopped Mr. Meredith had asked me if he might not call to see me at my cousin's house, and I had answered yes. He had also offered to call a cab for me, and to look after my luggage, if Mr. Smith should not be at the station. But there was no need for this; the first figure I saw as I stepped out on to the platform was a short, stout figure, in a grey overcoat, with a red face and no whiskers, which figure advanced at once towards me, and claimed me for its own—its own cousin, I mean, three times removed.

'I knew you directly from your Aunt Sarah's description,' he said. 'Welcome to London, though you are later than you said.'

And then, after I had shaken hands with Mr. Meredith, and wished him good-bye, my cousin had my boxes out of the van as quick as thought; I followed him into the cab which was waiting for us, and we were soon on the way to Westminster.

To describe the large family of cousins who welcomed me when I got there would make my story far too long. They were not all short and stout, and red-faced; and they were all very kind to me—let that suffice. What I saw in London, and what I thought of all I saw, must wait also another time of telling. Yet candour bids me confess that all the kindness of all my cousins did not completely take my heart by storm. They thought me of the country countryfied; while I thought them of the city citizenish; and we each liked our own ways and ideas best.

The first thing on reaching Westminster, I told my cousins how it was I had not arrived, as I intended, the day before; and they were much interested in my narrative, and asked many questions about Mr. Meredith; but principally, they wished to know if he was rich, and on this point I could not satisfy them. And I wondered over the history of the young lady with whom I had been confounded; wondered whether she had been restored to her sorrowing friends; but from that day to this I have never known.

I kept the recital of the business which had brought me to London until the day after my arrival.

'Lor!' cried all my cousins in chorus, 'what a joke if cousin Chrissy should turn out to be an heiress and a great lady! You must come to live in London, then, cousin Chrissy.' But I shook my head, and said I didn't know about that.

'Oh, yes, you must,' persisted one of the Miss Smiths; 'and you can marry Mr. Meredith then, and make a grand gentleman of him.'

The young lady, however, was in

a minority on this head; nearly all the other cousins turned up their noses at Mr. Meredith. He travelled second-class, and they didn't think much of him: and if cousin Chrissy was an heiress, she could pick and choose, and must look higher than that.

Then Mr. Smith, senior, took the 'Times' of the day, from a file of newspapers on a side-table, and proceeded to look for the advertisement. But it wasn't there. I took the slip I had cut out of the torn piece at home from its place of safety in my pocket, and handed it to him.

'What paper did you cut this out of, child?'

'Out of the "Times" newspaper,' was my ready answer.

'Yes, yes, I know; but the "Times" of what date?'

I said I didn't know.

'Not know!—then it may have been twenty years ago?'

I answered gravely that I didn't think it could be quite so long ago as that; that we didn't often see a London newspaper at the Nest; but now and then our rich neighbour, Miss Goodman, would send us a few numbers of the 'Times'; these, being seldom of very recent date, we were always told we need not return, and they generally came in the end into our waste-paper basket, whence I had taken what I had used in packing the eggs, on which occasion my eye had fallen, quite by chance, upon the advertisement in question. I had never thought of looking for the date of the paper; besides, as it was a torn piece, it was unlikely I should have been able to find it. Miss Goodman had been from home, and had not sent any newspapers for the last three or four months, so it must have been an old one, possibly much older than that, though certainly not nearly so old as twenty years ago. I thought cousin Smith must be joking there, though I couldn't see myself what there was to joke about.

All my cousins, down to the youngest of six years' old, were laughing at me.

'Why, how jolly green you are, cousin Chrissy!' cried my cousin Theodore, who was a grown-up

young man, and whom of them all I liked the least.

'Yes, don't you see,' pursued his father, still addressing me, 'that the date is a matter of great importance? In all these months that, by your account, may have passed since the advertisement appeared, there has been time for a dozen Miss Christina Smiths to start into existence; and ten to one but one of them has been clever enough, before this, to establish her claim to the fortune which may have been going a begging. I wish I had noticed the advertisement; but I don't often look at that sheet of the paper.'

If I had been green before, I was now red all over.

'When can I go to Messrs. Rudge and Finch's office, cousin?' I asked.

'To-morrow is Sunday. I will take you myself on Monday morning,' was his reply.

And he was as good as his word. But, alas! for the result of our inquiries.

The Miss Christina Smith who had been advertised for in the 'Times' of the 7th and 8th of April—nearly nine months ago—was one of the lawyers' best-known clients. They were, in fact, then transacting business for her of a very private and confidential nature, which even now they were not at liberty to disclose. The lady was eccentric, and, having occasion to leave London, where she resided, on a secret errand, while the business was pending, she had requested that if Messrs. Rudge and Finch had anything to communicate during her absence, they would address her not by letter, but through the advertisement column of the 'Times.' The lady's real name was not Miss Christina Smith at all; but she had desired (whether from mere fancy, or from any reason known to herself they could not tell) that the advertisement should be made out in that name. It had been the cause of a good deal of trouble to Messrs. Rudge and Finch, as I was the fourth Miss Christina Smith who had applied at their office in consequence. The three other ladies' visits, had, however, taken place long ago: Messrs. Rudge could not at all understand an appli-

cation so late after date as was mine. And I did not care to explain the reason. I would not have these hard lawyers laughing at me in my country simplicity, bending over my hamper of eggs and torn fragments of newspaper, as I had seen my cousins laugh when they heard of it. So, with a bow and a good-morning, I left the office, Mr. Smith accompanying me. He was very good to me, and did not laugh at me any more, or—what would have been worse—pity me; for, in spite of Mr. Meredith's advice, I could not help a sore feeling of disappointment.

So this was the end of the fine palaces and castles in the air which had arisen out of the baseless fabric of that 'Something to my advantage.'

Yet not quite the end, either. I rather think that something more to my advantage than any money—even wealth untold—could have proved to me, did arise out of that very journey to London. Is not happiness the best advantage? And am I not very happy? Mine has been, thank God, as long as I can remember, a happy life; yet I am happier now than I was ever in my life before. And why? What makes all nature so beautiful? Or rather, what has opened my heart to feel, as I never felt it before, the beauty of this world of ours, and the goodness of the God who made it? Why are the hours so golden-winged? Why is the reality better than the dream?

I stayed nearly a fortnight at Westminster. Aunt Sarah herself advised it; for when she heard the eventful story of my journey to town, she could not bear the idea of us two girls—Eliza Jane was to return with me—travelling alone all the way to Devonshire. I had told her of Mr. Meredith's kindness; how that at the end of the fortnight he would himself be going home; and that, by waiting till then, we should have his protection so far as his route lay with ours—by far the greater part of the way. And Aunt Sarah jumped at the idea. Mr. Meredith didn't jump, but he seemed very glad at her consent, for the idea had originated with him.

He came several times to Westminster during that fortnight; and he has been oftener still to the Nest in the weeks and months that have succeeded. With dear Aunt Sarah's full approval, we are engaged to be married.

And if to possess a good man's love; if to return that love with all my heart; if to know that with us both it will end but with our lives,—what do I say? Shall such love end with time? Shall it not rather, purified and exalted, last through all eternity? If, then, the prospect of wedded life together here, in a home where, if wealth enters not, the door is at least securely barred against poverty; if the hope of together attaining to the better home above;—if this be 'something to my advantage,' then is that something mine.

CHRISTINA SMITH.

CHARLIE CAREW.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'DENIS DONNE,' 'WALTER GORING,' 'PLAYED OUT,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

MISS LESLIE.

AFTER that dinner-party Henry Prescott refused with decision to second any further attempts to amuse Mr. Carew which his mother felt disposed to make. 'Take my advice and leave him to Di,' he would reply, when Mrs. Prescott, out of the goodness of her heart, would plan wild schemes of dissipation, in the which she designed that the Admiralty clerk should participate. 'Leave him to Di altogether, mother, and if she doesn't find that the game isn't worth the candle (as he's always saying about everything himself) before he goes, I'm very much mistaken.'

As Di did not make this discovery before the expiration of Mr. Carew's visit, but, on the contrary, seemed to find that the game deepened in interest, Henry Prescott found himself as much mistaken in theory as he believed his sister to be in act.

The shooting-party, with variations, was repeated several times, with the brilliant finale of the luncheon carried by the ladies left out. Di wanted Charlie to make himself popular amongst the men of the neighbourhood in which she had dwelt all her life; and she knew well that he would cease from even faintly feigning to do so as soon as her sister and herself made their appearance on the ground. Thereupon she abstained from doing what would have given Charlie a fair excuse for doing what would have most recommended itself to his taste, as well as to her own. And Charlie felt that she did so, and knew why she did so, and did not improve the opportunities she made for him.

He did not tell Miss Prescott so in so many words, but he made it clear to her, in his most gorgeously agreeable manner, that when she married him, she would have done with all the denizens of these re-

gions, excepting her own family. Jack Markham, in a glow of good feeling towards the man who had won the prize he coveted, invited the successful aspirant to stay with him during the hunting season, offering him a notoriously good mount as an inducement. This Charlie declined with a cool 'No—thanks. I'm nothing of a rider. You fellows have had all the laughs you'll get out of me at my lack of sporting tastes.' But though Charlie's refusal was chilling to the warmth of Jack's goodwill, Di's glance—half blush half gratitude—well repaid him for both the effort he had made and the mortification it had cost him. Perhaps, too, he derived a little consolation from the fact of Mr. Charles Carew being on the verge of departing; for though Jack had magnanimously kept to his resolve of not making it unpleasant to Di by keeping away from them while Charlie was there, Jack had sometimes found that his complacency caused him a smart. Miss Prescott made efforts to be kind to him, made efforts to cover her lover's coolness to him, and, with true love-keenness, these efforts were very apparent to the man for whom they were made.

At last the day arrived for Mr. Carew to take his leave of the Prescotts, and return to his duties at the Admiralty. On the whole it must be acknowledged that he was not altogether sorry to go. Several things had jarred upon an organization that he had for several years been sedulously striving to render superfine. There was too much roughness in the manners of Di's brothers—too much familiarity in the manner of her friend Mr. Markham, and too great a prolixity about the conversation of her mother, for Charlie's taste to pass through the ordeal of that time amongst them

all unwounded. He had been very much fascinated with Di when he saw her first in the midst of the Leslies, to whom he was well used. He was very fond of her still. Nevertheless, he was fain to confess to himself that it would perhaps have been more discreet had he 'waited to know more,' not of her, but 'of her people,' before he pledged himself.

But no trace of this half feeling made itself manifest in his manner when he was exchanging the last good-byes with Di, as she drove him to the station. His 'Good-bye, my own darling!' had the genuine ring of the metal about it, and the clasp of his slender, strong, white warm hand was very reassuring.

'You will come again soon, Charlie? You'll show me that the time hasn't been very heavy to you by coming again soon, won't you?' she said, bending out of the pony-carriage for one more shake of the hand—one last farewell. And she looked so pretty as she asked it, with that black velvet Glengarry coming well over her white, straight brow—with the shimmer of tender feeling over her softened eyes, and the rose on her cheek heightened by agitation: she looked so pretty and well-bred—there was such a caressing touch in that small, well-gloved hand of hers, that Charlie Carew felt she was all his wife need be, and promised to come again as cordially as she asked him.

'Ah! there's one thing I've forgotten to say, Di,' he cried, running back to her after the train had puffed up, and risking losing it—'there's one thing more I have forgotten to say—wouldn't it be well to ask one of the Leslies down here? civil after——'

'All their civility to me,' she interrupted. 'Yes, I think it would—I'll do it; shall it be Alice?'

'As you like—yes, Alice: there's the train off, by Jove!' Then he started off, catching the train cleverly, and committing Di to the fulfilment of a plan that was very abhorrent to her—why she hardly knew.

However, she had promised Charlie—promised him at parting,

too; so she could but moot the project to her mother, hope that all things would arrange themselves agreeably, and that Alice Leslie's visit would be productive of happiness to everybody. There was no gainsaying facts. They had been very kind to her, and she had been very happy with them at Bayswater. The least she could do for Charlie Carew's friend was to be civil and hospitable and kind to her in return.

It was late in the autumn when Miss Leslie reached the Prescott's—just that pleasant season which ladies declare with emphasis to 'be so very difficult to dress'—a difficulty they meet by tempering the coming breath of winter in a variety of ways that are not justified by the extreme seasons. Alice Leslie was an adept in the art of dress. She never missed an opportunity of making a picturesque effect. A little white cloth jacket, with big pockets and mother-of-pearl buttons all over it, would have been too cold for winter in appearance and too warm for summer in reality, but it was the very thing for the crisp, late October days. So with a petticoat where bands of red peeped out between the scallops of her looped-up shepherd's plaid silk or golden brown velveteen dress—so with the neat, trim little black velvet hat, with a band of grebe round its brim—she was a charming object in this costume, walking about the lawn and fields, exchanging affectionate confidences with her friend Di Prescott.

A very charming object. For she was not only young and picturesque, but she was very pretty too. Pretty with the beauty of blue eyes and black lashes and brows, and lovely nut-brown hair of that fluffy, wavy sort, that always arranges itself so well between fillets of ribbon. Miss Alice brought such a stock of these latter with her, that she quite bewildered Nellie Prescott, who could not make up her mind as to the relative merits of the violet, the blue, the green, or the rose-coloured bands with which Alice tied up her nut-brown tresses. The quiet toilettes that had been by way of being gay before, paled before the

brilliancy of colouring in which Miss Leslie indulged with impunity. Gay as she was she never looked too gay. Yet were the ribbons, and the white cloth jacket, and the bright-hued little cravats rashly bestowed on any other, that other seemed to flame, and confusion came of it.

She made herself very agreeable to the whole family—all of whom, save Di, were nearly strangers to her. The alliance between Miss Leslie and Miss Prescott had been formed at school, where Mrs. Prescott had seen Alice once or twice on occasions of going to fetch Di home. But to the 'boys,' as Di called her brothers, Miss Leslie was an utter stranger, and they were much dazzled by her—as 'it became them to be,' the London belle simply thought.

She took up the tone of delighting in the country and all that made up life in the same, with a delicate tact, that made it seem a very spontaneous, perfectly bewitching thing to 'the boys.' She 'liked roughing it,' she assured them. 'Liked roughing it!' that dainty creature, to whom the crumpling of a rose-leaf might have been supposed to be a serious inconvenience. It was a most graceful condescension on her part, Henry Prescott felt, when Miss Leslie rode his hunter, or suffered him to drive her about in a high, fast-looking dog-cart. It seemed to him that she stepped down from her high estate of delicate gracefulness and beauty in doing these things—she! a woman who was specially designed to lounge in a curve in a low-sloping carriage, and be drawn through the higher haunts of the world! A most graceful condescension! made for him.

The beauty with the blue eyes and the black brows and lashes spoke with a most girlish and engaging frankness of her 'friendship for Mr. Carew.' She advanced to meet Di's unacknowledged dreads and suspicions in a way that sometimes quite, and always nearly dispersed them. 'I think I was almost jealous at first,' she would say to Miss Prescott, when they were alone together; 'not that I

wanted him myself, but I didn't want any one else to have him.'

Then, in reply to this, Di, with the polite perfidy of woman, would say, 'There is no doubt that if you had wanted him yourself you would have had him; I couldn't stand against you, Alice.'

'Now do you think that I believe you think that? Well, anyway, I don't envy you any more: this life is far too jolly for any one in her senses to leave it for a life in London with Charlie Carew.'

'You say so because it's new to you. You would soon get bored down here when the first flush of novelty had gone off.'

'Never—never—never.'

'Oh, yes you would. Why, you regard a week without one ball and several gatherings of some sort as a blank altogether.'

'Ah! that's the atmosphere. I can't help wanting to participate in gaiety when I'm in the midst of the sound of it; but down here I don't hear of it, and so I don't want it. I wish I never had to leave down here.'

'I wonder if she would marry Henry,' Di thought, after this conversation with her friend. 'He's very much taken with her, and she seems to like to be with him, and to find pleasure in studying his tastes; but then that is Alice; she prides herself upon her tact.'

Meanwhile the fame of his sister's friend spread abroad through their circle, and Henry Prescott was very proud of his guest. Inquiries, direct or surreptitious, were always being made about her, and it flattered him that he should be the temporary guardian of such a celebrity. To be the permanent one was a bewildering dream of bliss in which he dared not indulge.

As for Alice Leslie, she merely obeyed the gay fancy of the moment, and did, and said, and looked just as it bid her, without a thought of an after part. It was very pleasant to the pretty, vivacious, fashionable girl, who was only one of many such up in her own set, to come down and put out the paler local lights, and be the one bright particular star and win all the honest

hearts, that showed her too clearly she could do so 'an only she willed it.' Pleasant to play at having pastoral tastes, at delighting in fair scenery, at roving the woods, and finding the fields and brooklets, and the simple society of a few chosen friends 'sufficient to her.' She knew that when the first note of winter festivity was sounded in her own *coterie* that she could leave all these without a regret, and go back, with new roses on her cheek, to the old fields where fresh conquests awaited her. It pleased her to think that they would all talk of her down here long after she had left them and they had drifted from her mind; talk of her and quote her sayings, and cite her dresses, and generally tell and retell the tale of her sojourn and successes amongst them. It was very much better than the sea-side, where she had spent the latter part of the summer. There she was subjected to the same set as in town to a degree that forbade all hope of their having anything fresh to say to each other when they met again in the winter. But here she was the stranger, the queen of hearts, the altar on which all sighed to lay their attentions. It was one little round of triumph to her from the moment she came down to breakfast, and was met by one brother with a flower, and the intelligence that the other had gone to meet the postboy, in order that she might have her letters the sooner, till the hour came for retiring, when all fought for the 'barren honour' of presenting her with her candlestick.

She was a sight, walking along the little village, capitably costumed, with the brothers, one on either side of her, each jealously regarding each word or glance of hers. 'The cub was getting his first lesson in the pleasure and the pain of loving from Miss Leslie. She took a safe tone with him, safe as far as she was herself concerned, that is, calling him a boy, and at the same time flattering him into a very unboyish heartache. He began to hate Henry for those years of seniority which made Alice refrain from taking that maddening elder sister's tone with him which she occasionally adopted

when 'the cub' dared to be too sentimental.

And she was a spectacle on Sundays, a spectacle that sometimes upset the curate, who was young and tender, like 'Little Billee,' causing him to wish that he had more than seventy pounds a year. Her little straight throat and small head were the very things to make that 'lily bend'—which is so becomingly suggestive of devotional feeling—an easy thing for her to accomplish. Her little prayer-book with the broad silver cross upon it, held in her little silver-grey kid-gloved hands; the tender-looking grebe collarette into which she nestled her round white chin; the sweet thrill of the voice that broke in and harmonised the inharmonious congregational singing; the way in which she half swept, half glided down the aisle, a sort of pious young sovereign—all these made her an unforgotten thing in that village for many a long day.

Only Jack Markham refused to bend the knee to her. 'Di's worth a thousand of her any day that can be named,' he said, contemptuously, after listening to Henry Prescott's earliest ebullitions of feeling respecting her. 'She's a good-looking girl enough, but take the wave out of her hair and the ribbons off her head, or do away with that hat and jacket, and those wonderful Balmorals, and Miss Alice Leslie wouldn't be such a great beauty, you'd see.'

But Henry refused to believe that he should see anything of the kind. 'Everything becomes her best—she makes defect perfection,' he said, gravely, his love developing that vein of poetry which is in most of us, whether it ever be brought out or not; 'she'd adorn a palace or a cottage equally well.'

'Whew-w,' Jack Markham whistled slowly; 'the wind sets in that quarter, does it? Now look here, old fellow, we neither of us know about palaces from personal experience; but take my word for it, if you tried her in a cottage, you would have a taste of her temper that would make you like her less.'

Jack Markham was not the only

one who was guilty of the weakness of speaking a word in season to a man in love. Di was very fond of her brother, fond of him and proud of him in a certain way. She esteemed him for his fine sense of honour, for that perfect integrity which not only kept him invariably from seeming the thing he was not, but even more, made him on all occasions seem the thing he was. She admired him for his daring and skill in the field and chace, for his good looks and good temper, for his manliness and courage and strength. She loved him warmly, as sisters do love brothers who pet and protect them. But withal she did not deceive herself about him, and she knew that he was not cast in the mould that would find favour in Alice Leslie's eyes. It was hard for Di to word the truth even to herself, but she could not blind herself to its being the truth. Henry had not the amount of education and cultivation which is deemed essential by even superficial young ladies who have been made free of current literature.

It was hard to word the truth to herself, and still harder to hint the same to her brother. But Di did it gallantly at last, feeling strongly that it behoved her to avert from him any pain that might be averted, since she had brought this Alice Leslie upon him. So she took the opportunity of doing so one day when it was raining, and Alice, 'bored and hipped' (and rather cross, truth to tell), had gone upstairs to lie down on her couch, and make a little private moan as to the tediousness of a wet day in the country.

The steady pattering down of the drops upon the dejected-looking shrubs immediately outside the windows seemed to have a depressing effect upon the whole party. Mrs. Prescott had retired, having declared it to be a good day to go and 'mend up' a lot of things in her bedroom. Nellie was employed in reviling the weather that prevented her driving over to the nearest town for more salmon-coloured wool wherewith to ground a gorgeous piece of worsted work, and in wandering about the room in very vague-

ness. Henry and Di were respectively trying to read, and failing, by reason of the former being nervously expectant of Miss Leslie's reappearance, and the latter being keenly alive to the fact; and 'the cub' was irritably conscious that he was much marvelled at by his brother and sisters for staying in the house when he could have gone into the more congenial atmosphere of the stables. 'Such the power of love.' Willie had a horror, a horror such as can only possess a boy, of being laughed at; but he risked that misery rather than leave the place that might possibly be graced by Miss Leslie's presence.

At last Ellen broke a silence, which had lasted some time, by exclaiming,

'When is Alice coming down, Di? I wish she would make haste. I want to try that duet with her.'

'Hadn't you better call her, Di?' Henry suggested. 'I'm anxious to hear that song. Call her down.'

Di laughed—'I thought you objected to music by daylight? Besides, Alice would not be grateful to me for disturbing her.'

Henry relapsed into his book for a page or two; then he defended his musical taste against that charge which had been made of daylight killing it.

'I've said sometimes that I don't care to hear a constant strumming when I'm making up my accounts in the morning; but when we none of us have anything better to do, we may as well have some music.'

'Especially if Alice Leslie will join us if we have some, and keep away from us if we haven't any; eh, Harry?' Ellen asked, laughing. 'Now I will be a jewel of a sister. I'll go and get her down.'

Di looked at her eldest brother as Ellen went out of the room, and she saw that he looked pleased, 'foolishly pleased,' she thought, considering all things. The colour came upon his brow as he met her glance, too. Altogether, the signs were sure and bad. The time for speaking had come.

'Poor Alice!' she said, leaning forward on her low seat with her book in her lap, and looking up with

a pretty little confidential air into her brother's face. 'Poor Alice; this has been a trying day for her—so wet.'

'Trying day for anybody,' he answered, seeing that he was expected to say something.

'Yes, but for her, particularly for her. She shrugged her shoulders at the woods and fields she has been saying such sweet things about, when she came down this morning, and said a wet season in their society would be rather crushing.'

Henry looked interested for a moment; then an expression of 'knowing more about it perhaps than Di did' swept over his face, and Miss Prescott felt called upon to say a word or two more.

'She'll be a charming little woman of the world when she marries. I fancy I see her already the mistress of a capitably-appointed house in a good neighbourhood. Alice would be wretched unless she were close to the park, and had a neat little brougham, and a showy saddle-horse, and a swell groom, and a running account at Elise's. Charlie and I shall be in such a much more humble way that we shall not see much of her.'

'She isn't married yet,' Henry Prescott said, hoarsely. The picture his sister had conjured up was a horrible one for the poor fellow to contemplate. It was borne in upon his mind that he was loving not at all wisely, and a great deal too well.

'No, she's not married yet, as you say; but that's the way she will marry, or ought to marry, to be happy: it's her groove.'

'She would be just as happy in another,' Henry Prescott replied; and Di had only time to shake her head and say 'No, no,' before Miss Leslie and Ellen came into the room.

'Alice has come to sing to you, Harry,' Ellen began at once. 'She was sound asleep when I got up, and just a little cross when I woke her, but she forgave me soon when I told her what I wanted.'

'Not cross, I'm sure,' Henry Prescott whispered, as he started up to meet her; and Alice gave him a little flashing glance, and muttered quickly,

'You won't believe that of me, will you? Nellie wouldn't call me cross if she knew about a letter I've had to-day. Mamma says I must go home to-morrow.'

She whispered all this standing near to Henry, looking up almost imploringly into his eyes.

'Go home to-morrow,' he repeated; 'oh! no you won't, Alice; I mean——'

'I fear I must,' she said with a sigh, turning away. Then she added, 'Come, Di, come and sing away some of my sorrow, I have to leave you to-morrow, dear. Now don't speak, it won't bear talking about.'

So she staggered them and puzzled them with her intentions and the abrupt announcement of her immediate departure, gracefully, and apparently excitedly, waving off all questioning on the subject. 'Mamma had recalled her and she must go,' she said. The truth was, she fancied that the dull and wet season had set in here, and that it would be livelier and more agreeable at Bayswater. So she determined to go away suddenly and be regretted.

She sang her tenderest songs in her tenderest tones to them that night. She put aside her gay brilliancy and substituted a soft air that was not sorrow exactly, but 'that resembled sorrow as the mist resembles the rain.' Looking at her, and listening to her as she warbled out metrical assertions to the effect that she would marry her own love, for true of heart was she, and others of a like order, Henry Prescott came to the conclusion that Di was much mistaken about her friend, and that the latter was peculiarly fitted by nature, habit, and education, to bless a country heart and adorn a country life. He remembered that—

'He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
And win—or lose it all.'

He would put his fate to the touch to-morrow before she left. But on the morrow his design was frustrated. Something intervened to delay Miss Leslie's departure, as shall presently be told.

CHAPTER V.

'ALMOST LIKE A BROTHER.'

The one thing in which Miss Leslie did not conform to the normal habits of her entertainers, was in the matter of getting up early. It was the sole thing in which Henry Prescott could have desired to see her other than she was. And this, not from any moral objection to the morning languor that might develop into laziness, but because it prevented his enjoying the first fruits of her society. In vain he got into the way of being a long time over his breakfast and the previous day's paper. In vain he would loiter about in the yard for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour after the groom had led his horse out, and then go back to the house, fraught with some question that was imperative, as to being asked of his sisters long after they believed him to be well away on the farm. It was all in vain that he did these things day after day with apparently inexhaustible patience; Alice Leslie scarcely ever could prevail upon herself to get out of her room before eleven o'clock.

But this morning, the morning on which she had avowed that she must leave them, the sound of Miss Leslie's light step as she sprang along the passage and down the stairs made itself heard much earlier than usual. Ellen had carried the pet guest a cup of coffee and her letters shortly after the post-bag came in. Ellen had also communicated a piece of intelligence which Di had received.

'It's a pity you're going away to-day,' the youngest Miss Prescott had said. 'Di has heard from Charlie, and he's coming down to-morrow to stay for a week.'

'Is he?' Alice replied, carelessly. 'I'm glad I'm going though; Di would be lost to me as soon as he comes.' Then she turned to her coffee and her correspondence; and Ellen left her, and went down to tell them that Alice would be down directly, for a wonder; and adding, to her brothers, 'I suppose you will stop in, and see her this last morning, both of you—won't you?'

Alice came in presently, looking prettier than ever, both the boys thought, with a deeper rose-tint over her fair face than usual, and with her bright hair pushed far off behind her ears, and rolling in crimped luxuriance behind. She was all that he had always felt sure she must be—all that a girl ought to be early in the morning, Henry Prescott thought, as he rose to meet her. Fresh and bright-hued in complexion, and dress faultlessly arrayed; perfect in all those delicate points of spotless collar and cuffs, and well-fitting shoes and waist-band—wafting into the room with the fragrance of rosewater, and the mere idea of some exquisitely-perfumed hair-wash about her—sparkling and fastidious and unexceptionably neat, without being too effervescent, fanciful, or fussily careful.

She came forward with a fluttering mass of open letters in her hand, and seated herself at the table, opposite to Henry, on the same side with Di, only separated from that young lady by Willie (to whom she was less of a novelty early in the day than to his elder brother—for Willie had devotedly disregarded the farm, and all appertaining thereto during Miss Leslie's sojourn amongst them). As soon as she was seated she commenced speaking rapidly, and with a slight air of embarrassment, to Mrs. Prescott. But though her words were given to the old lady, her looks, when she raised them from the table, were bestowed on the eldest son.

'I hardly know how to tell you, Mrs. Prescott—you will think me so everlasting, and mamma so very changeable; but I've heard from her again this morning, and she says if you can have me a little longer she shall be very glad to let me stay.'

'My dear! certainly—only too glad to have you,' Mrs. Prescott replied, warmly; and Henry gave Alice a long grateful look, as she raised her eyes to his once more, which would have satisfied her as to his feelings, even if she had not fathomed them before.

'How very kind of your mamma, Di said.'

'Merciful interposition of Providence on my behalf. I should have had no one to speak to, now Charlie Carew is coming,' Nellie put in, laughing.

Henry waited to make his recognition of the prolongation of the favour of her society until Miss Leslie had breakfasted, and was loitering by herself in the bay window; then he came to her, and said—

'Are you very sorry that your mamma has extended your leave of absence? Can you stand us and our dull ways, so different to yours, Di says, a little longer—patiently?'

He spoke so tenderly, that the soul of the coquette rose up and was eager for the fray. One scalp the more added to the collection she already had—what did it matter! A little meanness, a touch of falseness, a brief, well-acted lie, and the trick would be done! He was rather rough at present, a touch of love-sorrow would refine him, do him good, and perhaps cause him to be grateful to her for having brought 'out his best' in the years to come. Any way, whether it did this or not, the opportunity of adding to the list of her triumphs was given, and she would not miss it. So she looked up into his face (it is such an easy part to play, this one of fond feeling—such an easy, false, effective, shameful part, and it always gets filled so readily)—looked up into his face and almost sighed, and almost checked it, and answered, with an accent of reproach—

'A little longer! patiently! Is that all you know of me?'

He would have given all his acres to have been able to speak then, and tell her how well he thought he knew her, and how dear the knowledge was to him—to have been able to make her understand how unspeakably precious each single hair of that glistening nut-brown mass was to him—how beyond all price was the hope her last words had given him. But he could not. In the eyes of the rest of the unbiassed world his own sisters would not have been found wanting in a single feminine grace or charm by the side of the glittering Alice. But in the eyes of

Alice's lover she was peerless—as superior to his sisters as Hyperion to a satyr. The intensity of the worship made the worshipper feel uncouth, unpolished, unworthy in every way. This delicate creature—this daintily-coloured, fragile piece of china! how could he—mere rough earthenware that he was—dare to try to place himself beside her?

So he stood quite quelled, quite silent before her, looking down upon the proudly-poised little head of the queen of his soul. And she averted her eyes, that he might not see the laughter that lived in them, as she realized some of the Omphale sensations, and knew her Hercules was fluttering between hope and despair. Then, it was no part of her plan to let her host speak while her stay in his house still seemed a desirable thing to her—she put an end to the period by saying—

'Now I'll go and unpack my boxes again, and enjoy the full luxury of feeling that I am going to stay a little longer. I shall not seem sure of it while my trunks are packed.' With which speech she left him, feeling foolish, and happy, and unsettled, as he had never felt before.

And he had censured Di for going after strange gods, and not concentrating her affections on some local object! It was astonishing how leniently his love for Alice made him look upon his sister's choice.

Once more Di drove to the railway station to meet Charlie Carew, and this time there was no alloy to her happiness in meeting him, for he knew all there was to be known about her relations and surroundings. No alloy to her happiness?—She was almost sure that there was none—almost, but not quite sure, as she remembered how pretty Alice Leslie looked as she came out to the lawn gate to see her (Di) start.

Charlie had some very good news to tell her. He had just got his 'second class,' and would for the future be in receipt of a far better income than was his when he wooed and won Miss Prescott. He told her this at once, as soon as they got

free of the station and were bowling along the open country road—told her, in a hearty sort of sympathy way that was intensely gratifying. She felt that he was identifying her with his career—an ambition which is every woman's—when he spoke of this success to her as of a thing that intimately concerned them both.

Was there any alloy to the happiness of that brisk drive through that crisp early winter air? Was there any feeling that she wished she had not got it to tell when she began—

'Oh, Charlie! you know Alice Leslie is here, don't you?'

'Know she's here?—no I don't. Her mother told me the other day that she wanted Alice back at once. I thought, of course, she was gone.'

'No; she was going this morning; but there came a letter from her mother, saying she might stay on. And, do you know, I think Harry is more than rather glad of the reprieve.'

'What! Has Miss Alice been investing her idle time in beguiling him?' Charlie asked, laughing. 'She can't let her powers lie fallow on any consideration.'

'Come, Charlie,' Di said, promptly resenting the implied slur upon her brother; 'it would be a good match for Alice—one that she might well contemplate making without any stress of circumstance.'

'Undoubtedly; nevertheless she won't contemplate making it,' Charlie said, as they drew up at the entrance; and this time the Prescott family abstained from coming in procession to meet Mr. Charles Carew.

'The two other girls were gone out for a walk,' Di heard, when she inquired after them. 'Alice said she thought you would not want them,' Mrs. Prescott said, significantly; and Di felt that Charlie did not like the manner significant being applied to him, and so answered more curtly than was usual with her—

'No, I don't want them; but they might have said where they were going, and then we could have gone to meet them—couldn't we, Charlie?'

'Yes,' Charlie replied, with unwelcome alacrity. 'But, after all,

some one can say which way they have gone; surely some one has seen them?'

'Impatient to see Alice,' Di thought, dejectedly. 'Oh dear! what had I better do, I wonder?—let things take their course, or try to regulate them?'

Poor Di! Thousands—tens of thousands of women have asked themselves this question, when some sign of the wavering allegiance has been shown to them; and each one would have done well to accept this truth—that for all the good gained by taking other means, it would be as well to let 'things take their course.'

Especially is it idle and vexatious, and altogether more worthless and void of good result than vanity itself, when the woman who fears desertion has given all the love she has to give, and not only given it, but shown him that she has done so. Satiety cannot well avoid setting in where too much sweetness reigns. He is very apt to love more, if she shows that she may love less, for

*'The heart of a man's like that delicate weed
Which requires to be trampled on boldly indeed
Ere it give forth the fragrance you wish to extract:
Tis a simile, trust me, if not new, exact.'*

Now, Di was very fond of Mr. Carew, and she had shown all her fondness without fear. But she had plenty of sense, and plenty of pride, and a sound strong feeling that it would be useless to struggle against the inevitable. If he were inclined to admire her dazzling friend, more than in honour he ought to have done, no feeble holdings back on the path he wanted to take would effectually restrain him. So she wisely determined to be passive—to let 'things take their course,' and only to seek to ward off evil by making herself as attractive as possible.

She was much too sensible to scorn any of those adventitious aids of dress which are so powerful for good or ill. Di knew very well that Charlie, who took the colour of his eyes and the tone of his hair and complexion into consideration whenever he bought a new cravat—whose gloves were always immaculate—who was always, in fact, so well

dressed, that it was impossible to say what he wore; she knew that Charlie would not be lenient to her appearance falling short of Alice's in any way. Di did not deck herself in such daring bits of colour as did the brilliant, brown-haired girl who could wear any hue with impunity; but Charlie found her appearance very satisfactory when they started for their walk, and he marked the low easy fall of her shoulders, outlined by the rich dark fur tippet she wore over her black velvet jacket. Her way, too, of carrying her dress up in one hand, as though it had been a habit, was pretty, for she had not looped it up properly because she had been driving. Yes; she was a nice, easy figure—one that would pay for dressing to the full as well as—the young lady who broke upon his vision at the turn of the road, even as he was thinking this. In reality, there were two young ladies and a gentleman, but he overlooked Jack Markham and Nellie Prescott in his admiration of Alice Leslie.

She had risen to the occasion in a manner quite worthy of her aim and herself. That is to say, she had dived to the bottom of one of her trunks and brought up a dress hitherto deemed 'too good for the country.' Picture her as she advanced to meet Charlie and Di; in a blameless costume of grey plush velvet, looped up over the petticoat, that had stripes of velvet, looking like cross-bars of red pastry upon it. Picture this sheeny, lustrous figure, crowned by waving masses of nut-brown hair, kept well together by the compact little oval black hat—coming along to meet them, knowing that she was perfectly appointed, knowing that she walked well, and knowing, moreover, that the man she was meeting was very keen about such things! Mr. Carew had seen her last in full evening dress, floating round a big ball-room, in another man's arms. He liked this view of her much better; he liked it so well, in fact, that he did not take his eyes away from her until Nellie exclaimed—

'Well, Mr. Carew, you seem to have forgotten me.' Then he shook

hands with his future sister-in-law hurriedly, and they all turned to walk homewards.

Presently Henry Prescott joined them, and dismounted. Then the party of six broke into fragments, Nellie and Jack Markham leading, the authorized lovers coming next, and Mr. Prescott and Miss Leslie bringing up the rear. Alice was flushed—with exercise?—most becomingly, and there was just a little touch of agitation in her tone as she said—

'You didn't come home to luncheon to-day; how was that? We were quite dull without you, and offended Willie very much by regretting you openly.'

'Did you regret me openly,' he asked.

'Yes, I did; it was ungrateful to Willie, was it not? The poor boy had wasted his whole morning in trying to make himself agreeable to Nellie and myself; it took away his appetite to find he had failed.'

'I am almost sorry you regretted my absence "openly,"' Henry Prescott muttered. 'Not but what it is very good of you to regret me at all, or think of me at all; but if you had cared much you wouldn't have said it.'

He looked eagerly into Alice's face as he said it, and the girl trembled with the dread she had that she might not be able to repress him until the time came for it to matter little whether he spoke or not. He saw the tremor, and fancied it a favourable sign—fancied that she kept her eyes fixed on the ground because she feared to let him see all she was feeling, which she did in truth, though she was feeling something widely different from that which he hoped and imagined.

'It would be difficult for any one under any circumstances to get up much deep feeling about any one else staying away at luncheon time,' she said, with a little laugh, 'unless you were a Daniel Lambert missing oysters.'

'Have you been walking far?' he asked, irrelevantly.

'About three miles, I believe; they seemed ten to me.'

'Has Jack Markham been with you all the time?'

'Nearly—not all the time,' she answered, with a scarcely perceptible shrug of the shoulders, which indicated that Jack Markham's presence had added to the seeming distance. The shrug, slight as it was, was not thrown away on the man for whom it was given: it crushed the dawning jealousy he was quite prepared to feel, even about Jack.'

'Jack is one of the best fellows in the world,' he began, enthusiastically.

'So you all say,' she replied, indifferently. 'I see that he looks very healthy and happy, and that is about all I do see in him.'

'You have heard of him and Di, I suppose; she would have done well to take him.'

'Oh, yes; I have heard about it,' Alice replied, almost testily. 'It would have been funny, though, if she had taken him when she could get Charlie Carew.'

She spoke with an earnest warmth that Henry Prescott had never seen her evince about anything before.

'You think highly of Carew, then?' he said; and she remembered herself, and controlled all evidence of emotion, as she replied, coolly enough—

'Oh, yes; as highly as you think of most people of whom you know nothing particular one way or the other. We're very intimate; he's almost like a brother to me.'

CHAPTER VI.

'But now to send me back
To faded hopes and fears;
To bid me seek again the track
My foot has left for years,
To cancel what must be;
To alter what has been:
Ah! this indeed is mockery
Ft for a fairy queen.'

The man who was 'almost like a brother' to Miss Leslie and that young lady herself found themselves in the drawing-room together for about ten minutes before dinner. Whether the situation was unpremeditated, or the result of design on any one's part, cannot be determined. Alice was not wont to

hurry herself over her toilet, but this evening she was ready before either of her friends. Charlie Carew rarely risked the gloom which settles over the 'early man' in the drawing-room before dinner; but this day he came down two minutes after Miss Leslie. She was sorting a collection of music when he came in, standing before the piano with her back to the door. Apparently she did not hear him enter, for she maintained her position without making a sign. At last he came near to her and spoke.

'The country seems to agree with you. I never saw you looking better.'

He stood facing her now, at the end of the piano, leaning one arm upon it, bending down his head to make her meet the admiration his eyes were expressing.

'It does agree with me, and I'm glad you think I look well. Did you come down before all the others to tell me that?'

'I dare not tell you anything more now.'

A scarlet flush supplanted the usual delicate rose-tint on her face as she lifted her head and looked at him. There had been a flirtation between them at one time—a flirtation sufficiently well marked to empower her own set to kindly talk about it a good deal when Charlie engaged himself to Di Prescott. She remembered all these things as he spoke, and it seemed to her that he remembered them too.

'You are looking so well,' he went on, 'that if I had been wise I should not have put myself in the way of seeing you.'

'The sight is not likely to prove dangerous, Mr. Carew; you are well guarded.'

'Am I—I'm not so sure of that; not so well guarded but that I felt it like a knife in my heart just now when I heard that you were carrying on with Henry Prescott.'

'That's simply absurd,' the girl said, with a haughty movement of the head—a movement Charlie much admired. He was so foolishly 'taken' invariably with all such small airs and graces. 'That's simply absurd: besides, if it were

the case, wouldn't the arrangement be perfect? He will be your brother: what a charming family party we should be.'

'Don't torture me,' Di Prescott's lover pleaded. 'I appreciate you too highly to calmly contemplate seeing you throw yourself away.'

'On one of the family—surely I might be satisfied with what you have found good enough. If it all comes to pass, what a comfort our mother-in-law will be to us both, won't she?'

Mr. Carew winced. Mrs. Prescott was one of the drawbacks he was beginning to find to this marriage scheme of his. Nevertheless it jarred upon him that Alice Leslie should scoff at her. So now he winced, and moved a little impatiently, and Alice took heart of grace in seeing that still she could make him suffer.

'Shall I be one of Di's bridesmaids? She has asked me, but I have hesitated; I wanted to know whether you would like it or not,' she asked, going on with her occupation, and speaking out in the accents of feigned unconcern.

'Like it!' He echoed her last words pathetically.

'Does that mean that language of your own cannot tell how much you would like it? or that you're disgusted with me for contemplating occupying a part you have designed for another? or what?'

'It means—I won't tell you; you know very well what it means. You are unfeeling, Alice; as you have no right to be, considering all things.'

'Am I unfeeling—considering all things?' Her eyes met his now, sparkling with the light that had often been brought to bear upon him of old, with soft pearly reflections on her transparent forehead cast from the waving raised hair, with one small hand resting upon the pile of music, in dangerously close proximity to his.

It was in him to be carried without consideration by such things—the beauty present was always more potent with him than the beauty absent; he never 'made light of the rest if the rose was not there.' So

now he prisoned the fluttering hand, and told her he 'dared not thank her as she deserved to be thanked for letting him see that it had not been all play to her.'

'Now we must not get sentimental,' the girl said, laughing, and affecting to try and release her hand; 'that would be too absurd in your position. Moreover, what would Dinah say?' and again Charlie Carew winced—for the Christian name of his betrothed was far from his taste—as he answered—

'I should hope Di would have too much sense to be jealous.'

'Or to seem so: which do you mean?'

'Both; that is a sort of thing I couldn't stand.'

'Without cause, and she certainly has no cause to be jealous of me.'

'I don't know about that. I thought so myself till I saw you to-day, but now!—Well, any evil consequences that may ensue will be to myself only.'

'I am not so sure of that,' Alice said, in a low voice, walking away discreetly to the fireplace as she spoke. Then the rest came in; Di with a paler face and a more anxious look in her eyes than he had ever seen in her before. And his conscience smote him a little about Di, and his heart smote him much about Alice!

It was in vain that he sought to conceal it from himself; he was in a very awkward position. It was not only that duty called him one way and inclination another, but that he was conscious that whatever he did or said, or left undone or unsaid, gave pain to one or other of the two women between whom he was steering his perilous course. Di was jealous with reason and with right. Alice was jealous without either. So he taught himself to believe that it behoved him to give her the least cause for the feeling. It worried him that Di should look wistfully at him when, by tone or glance, he made manifest his too deep admiration for her friend. It worried him, and made him feel that Di was exacting, and inconsiderate, and oppressive, and not at all adapted to share the life he should

like to lead. It seemed to him that he could have borne to see Di surrounded by admirers with perfect composure—with more than composure, in fact, with pride and satisfaction. Indeed, he would have been delighted to see his taste endorsed in such a way by other men. It was always pleasant to a man to feel that his wife could command any amount of homage; but he began to fear that Di, good-looking as she undoubtedly was, lacked the charm which would make other men envy him! Alice had it, and no mistake; there would have been some triumph in carrying her off—some compensation for the loss of bachelor freedom in going into a room with a woman who was always faultlessly got up, and to whom every one was eager to be introduced. There had been a most wanton wasting of a golden opportunity in his allowing a passing fancy for a pretty fresh face make him lose Miss Leslie.

She was in the full swing of the society to which he belonged. She would have presided at his table and made his house attractive to his friends in a way that Di, with her scant knowledge of the world, her country habits and ideas, would be incapable of doing. He knew now that he was only affectionately fond of poor Di; he felt horribly certain that she would pall upon him, and that he would speedily become bored and indifferent to her. Then what a nuisance her being in love with him would be; how hideously his lot would contrast with that of the man who married Alice Leslie. As he thought all these things, sitting there in silence, Di almost fathomed that he was repenting, and again she was torn to pieces with conflicting doubts as to what it would be well—possible—for her to do.

'The heart is a free and a fetterless thing!' Miss Prescott remembered that it was this, on the authority of some lyric poet unknown. Free and fetterless, and given to change; it was human to be so, and Charlie Carew was very human. She tried hard not to blame him, not to hate him with the hot hate of

tortured love, as she saw the shadow of the coming change.

It was hard, too, to preserve precisely the same demeanour as of old to Alice, to the girl who was winning so easily what Di prized above all earthly things—Charlie's love. There was something that was cruelly hard to bear in Miss Leslie's coolness. Di felt that her state of mind was patent to her rival, and her rival was most airily unconcerned about it—accepting the constraint which overclouded the others as a fitting tribute to her winning powers.

In addition to the private pangs of jealousy, Di was smarting under the half consciousness of its being transparent to her own family, to those who had never cordially approved of Charlie Carew. During all the years she had known him, she had never seen Henry look so grave and sad. The words 'dull and mute' but faintly express the quality of the dulness and speechlessness which seemed to possess him; and Di fell into the error of imagining that he was these things on her account, which it need hardly be said was not the case. He looked at Mr. Carew rather in the light of a rival to himself than a defaulter from his sister now.

We all know what a long evening is like in a country house, when the party is small and three or four of the members of it are quite the reverse of being at their ease. The frequent glances at the clock, whose hands lag as they never lagged before; the lame attempts at establishing general conversation; the hopeless failures in accomplishing the same; the vain efforts to conceal the consciousness of concealing; the wild joy which pervades each heart when the moment for going to bed and getting out of it all arrives; the frantic zeal with which each one clings to the weak hope that before to-morrow night something will have turned up to render matters more endurable. Such evenings have been in the experience of most of us, and surely they are punishment sufficiently heavy for any but the blackest sins of the most hardened offenders.

It would all have gone better if Ellen had not allowed herself to be engrossed by a book, which she found far more agreeable than any of her companions. Indeed, just at the close of the evening, there was, through her agency, a slight reaction against the distrust and monotony that had reigned.

'Let us have some music,' she said, briskly. 'Come, Alice, you sing, and Di will accompany you.'

'What shall I sing?' Alice asked, languidly rising, and addressing Charlie Carew. Nellie answered for him.

'He doesn't know or care anything about singing. I'll select for you—this jolly little song, "'Tis all that I can say."'

So Alice, standing behind Di, sang the sweet tinkling melody to which Tom Hood's graceful, tender words have been set, and Charlie found himself drawn towards the piano, up near to Alice's side; and Di kept her face steadily set towards the wall, and knew that her brow was burning.

It was a large room, and the trio at the piano were well removed from the vicinity of the rest of the party. They remained there after the song had come to a conclusion, Di playing a dreamy piece in a reckless way, the other two motionless and silent—strangely motionless and silent—wrapt in the strains, perhaps.

Presently Di felt impelled to break the spell which seemed to be upon them. She broke off suddenly in the middle of a bar, rising and turning round on the instant. As she did so she wished that she had never played at all, or gone on playing for ever, or done anything rather than see what she did—Alice's hand clasped in Charlie's, willingly, lovingly, as no girl can suffer her hand to be clasped, save by a man who loves and is loved by her.

The position was embarrassing enough for them all, but it was made more agonizing to Di by her dread that the others had seen it also. She brushed hastily past the pair, saying, as she did so, 'I think we are all tired: won't it be well to say good-night, and not disturb Alice in her room to-night, Nellie?'

So, contrary to their usual custom, there was no dressing-room chat between the three girls that night. Di wanted to be alone. It was necessary now that she should make up her mind to do something definite on the morrow.

Another mind was also made up that night. Henry Prescott had not seen what his sister had, but he had seen enough to make him heartsore and doubtful. Alice had been very sweet to him—sweet and encouraging, as it never occurred to him a girl would be unless she meant to marry him when he asked her. And from his point of view it seemed impossible that Alice should ever have doubted his intention of asking her, after all he had said and looked. Now it appeared as if there was more than a possibility of a mistake being made, and so he resolved to set the doubt at rest in the morning.

It was not Henry Prescott whom Alice Leslie had hoped and expected to see when she left the house for a before-breakfast stroll the next day. That it was not was painfully evident to him when she gave him her hand unwillingly, and turned her face, where a blush of vexation reigned, towards the house, as if in anticipation of some other appearing.

'You are early this morning,' he began, turning round, with the evident intention of accompanying her.

'Yes. I'm soon going away, you know; and it has come to me to feel that I have been wasting opportunity in not seeing more of the country—at all times of day, I mean. I may never have the chance again.'

'Often, I hope.'

'Then it will be when I am travelling.'

'Who knows? you may live here.'

'Never, I hope,' she answered, almost pettishly. 'I should cut my throat in a week if I felt myself fixed in an English country place for life. I haven't the local mind. I can't stand middle-class country people and their small interests, their wild excitement about each other's housemaids' iniquities, and their generally placid monotony. You see, I am not "to the manner born." I should adopt it awkwardly.'

She spoke rapidly and earnestly. With all his admiration for her, Henry Prescott had never been much impressed with the truthfulness of this 'girl for whom his heart was sick.' But he felt that she spoke the truth now, and he was more pained by its being the truth than vexed at her rudeness in speaking it.

'You have had an unfortunate experience of "middle-class country people," Miss Leslie,' he said, gravely.

'No, I have not; I have had a remarkably favourable experience. I have known you and your mother and sisters, and I am very fond of you all, and you know it; but you are unlike the majority, and when one speaks of a class one thinks of the majority.'

'Wherever you were the rough and coarse would fall away in awe, and the refined would seek and assimilate with you: it would be so, trust me, even in the country.'

She laughed, and shook her head.

'Thanks for the compliment and the flattery, but I have no ambition to reform a neighbourhood.'

They had come to a little wicket-gate that opened out from the plantation through which they had walked into a meadow. They stopped at it, and she leant her arms on the top of it, and bent her head down in a nervous impatient manner, that was in harmony with her words and way of uttering them.

The man by her side did not deem his deserts other than small with regard to this girl, but he did not 'fear his fate too much.' If he had erred in his estimate of her, he would realise the full effects of that estimate at once.

'Have I been mistaken about you all this time, Alice?' he began; and she lifted up her eyes and asked innocently—

'All what time?'

'All the time you've seemed to—like me to love you.'

'No, not a bit mistaken. I have liked you to love me as a sister.'

'It was no sister's interest you have shown in me.' He spoke very sadly. Alice Leslie would have been

more flattered if he had infused a touch of bitterness into his tone. She rather liked to be reviled about such things; the scalp had an additional charm which had cost the victim visible torture in the taking.

'It was no sister's interest you have shown in me; at least I thought it meant more, and I've been mistaken. You'll forgive me for troubling you about it, won't you?'

'Yes,' she said, holding out her hand to him; and he took it, standing still, like one who was sorely stricken.

'Forgive you, yes; and be very grateful to and fond of you,' she murmured: 'and you will forgive me for having been blind, for that is what it has been.'

'No, not that,' he said, dropping her hand. 'Keep truthful, Alice, in word at least. You have not been blind; you saw it all, and knew what was coming, and helped it forward, and I know you did all this and can forgive you; but I can't forgive you if you're false enough to pretend you're taken by surprise. There, I have said my last word on the subject.'

'And we shall always be friends?' she asked, pathetically.

'Yes, always, if you care for my friendship. I can't turn against a girl I love because she prefers another fellow; but you have been a bright star in my life, Alice, and it will seem dark for a long time without you.'

'You won't miss me for long; no one is missed for long,' she said.

'Is that your creed? Well, it's not mine, thank heaven.' Then he went away and left her, and she waited on expectantly, impatiently, and no one came.

Not that the one for whom she waited, Charlie Carew, was a laggard in love by any means, but he found himself very unexpectedly detained. Di Prescott's voice summoned him into the drawing-room as he was picking up his cap in the hall, preparatory to taking a stroll, about the same time that Henry joined Alice. 'Come in here, Charlie,' she cried out, in a firm, clear tone, and he, reassured by the tone, went in unhesitatingly.

She got up and met his extended hand warmly, but stood off when he would have kissed her; at which rebuff he shrugged his shoulders and sauntered off to the window, as though a woman's whims were really beyond him.

'It's always useless going round a subject, isn't it Charlie?' she began. 'It would break my heart, crush me completely, to marry you and feel that you loved Alice Leslie. After what I saw last night can I be sure, can you be sure yourself, that you don't care more for her than for me?'

'You are exacting.'

'Am I? Perhaps so, about what is due to my love and your honour. Look you here,' she added, abruptly, and then came a look in her eyes that made her more beautiful than Alice Leslie for the moment, 'I will never be tolerated. I believe I can endure a sharp pain, but I will not court the dull aching of indifference. If I am not prized above every one, I will not seem to be held dear by you in a lesser degree. I offer you your release from all the vows you made the other day, and no one shall ever blame you to me for taking it; but I *can't* play second to any woman in the world.'

'Do you dread my asking you to do so?'

'Not your asking, but your forcing me to do so. I am not good enough to rashly engage to play the part of a neglected wife.'

'I cannot condescend to combat mad jealousy.'

She laughed scornfully.

'Don't be bitter, Charlie. The remembrance of the position you both put me in last night might check anything of that sort, if the thought of the easy way out of your difficulty which I show to you does not do it.'

'If you wish to break off the engagement I can make no appeal. I had better leave to-day, and write to your brother from town.'

'I will tell my brother. As to

your leaving to-day, well, Charlie, that you must decide about.'

She regarded him wistfully while she gave him this last chance of appealing against her 'offer of release.' He did not take it, and two hours afterwards the groom drove him to the station, and the Prescotts saw him for the last time, while Di took herself for a long drive, with only Pet and her thoughts for companions.

The evil-doer meanwhile was not flourishing like a green bay tree. Alice Leslie was very far from being guiltless in the matter; but guilty people get such hard measure dealt out to them by their friends, that it is quite a relief occasionally to take the other side. My sympathies have always gone greatly with the kindly old Scotchwoman, who inquired regretfully why nobody prayed for the 'paur de'il.' So now there is strong temptation to lighten the darkness which hangs over Alice.

Naturally she did not stay very long in the house after having refused the master of it. She occupied herself a great portion of the day in packing her trunks, and the rest of it in writing letters; and when she came down to dinner there were more traces of tears on her face than on Di's. When she departed from the Prescotts she did so with many protestations of eternal friendship for Di, and many entreaties that Di would come and spend part of 'next season' with her at Bayswater. But before that next season Mrs. Leslie had pointed out the path of duty to Charlie Carew, and compelled that young man to take it. Need it be said that the aforesaid path led to the altar, where Alice soon joined him. Jack Markham, when he heard of it, felt that his star was in the ascendant again. Whether it was so or not shall be told at some future time, when passages from the married life of Charlie Carew will be given to those who have been interested in his last bachelor days.



LIFE IN LODGINGS.

By TOM SLENDER.

LIFE in lodgings! What different impressions these words convey! There are some persons who, having every comfort and luxury at command, imagine such a life to be rather a pleasing variety than otherwise. Tired of the monotony of having nothing to desire, they almost look forward with delight to the prospect of 'roughing it' for a few weeks in some half-furnished lodgings by the seaside; and when the weather is fine, and one bright and sunny day succeeds another, it does not so much matter what the lodgings are, provided the beds are clean and the food eatable. But to live in lodgings day after day, week after week, till the year's cycle is completed, and to pass year after year in the same fashion through fair weather and foul, in sickness and in health, is certainly about one of the least comfortable and most dispiriting things that can be done. It is amusing to hear people who have the means of gratifying every wish, and who live in the most comfortable, well-arranged houses, assuring their poor relations that they have known a great many persons who were exceedingly comfortable in lodgings. Small rooms are, they affirm, more cosy than large ones; and there is an almost enviable luxury in not having the responsibility and cares of an establishment. Nothing is easier than for a rich man to lounge comfortably in an easy-chair, and legislate for his poorer neighbours, and enlarge authoritatively upon the imaginary bliss of genteel poverty.

It happened to me that, after a great commercial crisis, my husband, finding it necessary to economize, in a reckless moment conceived the idea that the readiest and pleasantest way of attaining his object would be to let our house. We had only just bought and furnished it; and it suited us exactly in all respects. And as I had been congratulating myself that nothing more remained to be done but to sit still and enjoy it, I was struck with

dismay when it was proposed that a letter should be written to Messrs. Lettum and Cheatum, requesting them to find us a tenant for our house.

Having got this idea into his head, my husband (persuaded himself, and tried to persuade me, that it would be a really pleasant thing to do.

'Pleasant to leave this house, which we have just made so clean and comfortable?' quoth I.

'That is just the reason, my dear. We are not quite settled yet; and it is in a good situation, and a tempting offer to any one in want of a furnished house. Besides, the independence of being able to come and go just as and when and where one likes would be so delightful. The sense of freedom which that alone would give would, I am sure, make up to you for the loss of any of the minor home comforts which you might miss. We might even go and live abroad,' added he.

'Live abroad! I detest it. I did it once, but Heaven preserve me from ever doing it again!'

'Well, but think of the luxury of having no housekeeping; no domestic anxieties; no servants; of being able to go about from place to place just as you please. The Falconers always live in this way.'

'Possibly—but they are the last people whose advice or example I would follow in a matter of this kind. They do not care to be comfortable: indeed I do not believe that they even know the meaning of the word.'

'My dear, that is just what I am trying to impress upon you. It is not only cheaper, and far more wholesome, than living so long in one place, but it is so much more comfortable.'

I shook my head, and said, in as resigned a tone as I could, 'You must do as you please: gentlemen always do. Only do not try to impose upon yourself and me by supposing that we shall find comfort in leaving a house like this, and living in wretched, dirty lodgings.'

'I assure you, my love, that things are quite changed now: that beautiful lodgings are to be had everywhere. In fact, it is become *the* fashionable way of living. I entirely believe all I tell you.'

I was silent. I would not contend: I never do; and, besides, I was weak enough to entertain a faint hope that his words might prove true, and in the depths of my heart had some curiosity about this *terra incognita*. So I did my best to facilitate the letting of our house, which was soon accomplished in the most satisfactory manner.

I felt a sudden pang as my own door closed behind me, and shut me out from the right to go in and out as I pleased; and I got into the fly which was to convey us to the station. We both disliked the sea, and had determined to make a trial of —, as affording more amusement than any other inland place we knew of; and we had been much struck with the extreme beauty of its scenery the previous summer, while visiting some friends in the neighbourhood.

I had written to these friends to secure lodgings for us out of the town, if possible, and had been well pleased to hear that some had been found in a small but beautifully-situated house which had often attracted our notice as we drove by.

It was early spring, and the weather still cold; so we were glad to find a fire, and tea, awaiting us; but, beyond these creature-comforts, there was not much that looked inviting. Even my husband glanced at the scanty, rickety, and not over-clean furniture with dismay, as he turned to the window, saying—

'Charming prospect, my love; is it not?'

'Beautiful!' I said. 'It would be delightful if we could live out of doors; but I do not see how we can exist in these wretched rooms.'

There was a large round table in the middle of the room—large, at least, for the size of the room; a small square one, on which was placed the tea-tray; a dirty leather arm-chair on one side of the fireplace, and a cane garden-chair with a chintz-covered cushion on the other; dingy

damask curtains of skimp dimensions, and a faded drugget for a carpet. Such was the furniture of the rooms in which we were to live, morning, noon, and night, for some weeks to come.

'You mean they are badly furnished,' my husband replied to my remark. 'Yes! to be sure they are; but that don't matter. We can soon set that to-rights by driving to — and hiring some furniture. We will do that to-morrow.'

I agreed to this; and we were busily employed, the first few days, in trying to make the two miserable little rooms look more comfortable and home-like. We succeeded better than I expected; the weather soon became genial and warm; the scenery was most beautiful; we spent the day in long drives and rambles over the country; and I began to think that perhaps, after all, 'life in lodgings' had its advantages, when a circumstance occurred which dispelled any anticipations of comfort I had indulged in. One afternoon, when we came in from a long walk, I found the table covered with cards—Mrs. Cumberley, Miss Cumberley, Miss Julia Cumberley, Mr. Cumberley, Mr. Augustus Cumberley. It was now my husband's turn to look thoroughly dismayed.

'What is all this? Who on earth are all these people? My dear, do you know? Are they friends of yours?'

'Friends of mine? No, indeed—I never heard their names before. I dare say they live at Norton Court—that large white modern-looking house we passed this morning—but I know nothing of them.'

'Then why, in the name of heaven, did they come? Surely we might be left in peace in a place like this, where we have not a single acquaintance. There will be no comfort in this sort of life, if people are to come just as if we were at home.'

'We had many friends at home that I was delighted to see,' I replied, warmly. 'I know nothing of these people; but I suppose that it is intended as a civility.'

'I dare say it is; but we don't want civility,' he replied, impa-

tiently. 'We shall have to return it. If this sort of thing goes on, we shall be driven out of the place.'

'Then did you mean to live like a hermit, and see no one? That would indeed be a charming combination of discomfort and dulness.'

I spoke mischievously, for I was really quite as much annoyed as he was.

Again and again he recurred to his grievance, and declared that he would not stay in the place if he was to be persecuted by visitors.

'I dare say that now everybody in the place will call. The people in the house will come next, I have no doubt.'

'What! those wonderful-looking Miss Crutchleys? No, I should not think that likely. I do not suppose such a thing was ever done.'

But, in spite of my confident disclaimer of such a contingency, we were not quite at our ease, and lived, for the next few days, in continual dread of some invasion.

At last my husband's words proved true; for the first wet day, when there was no possibility of escape, and I had established myself comfortably to read a new novel which I had procured the day before from the library at —, the untidy-looking maid opened the door, and approaching me awkwardly, with a huge tray in her hand, said, pointing to a card that lay there, 'Please, ma'am, the ladies downstairs want to know if it would be convenient to you to see them now?'

I was silent from dismay and astonishment. My husband said, quickly, 'Some business matter, of course. Did the ladies say why they wished to see Mrs. Plantagenet?'

'They've been going to call many days, only you've been out, sir,' she answered, blushing and curtsying.

I had been considering what I could do to guard myself against this intrusion, and could only, upon the spur of the moment, invent one excuse.

'Will you say, if you please, that I am going to dress for dinner?'

'My dear—really—you cannot say that. Why, it's not four o'clock, and they know we do not dine till

half-past six,' quickly interrupted my husband.

Extremely provoked at his interference, I said, pettishly, 'Then say that I am quite disengaged, and shall be delighted to see them.'

The maid retreated; and I asked angrily why my husband wished to make my life intolerable by bringing such annoyances upon me.

He looked aghast, both at my vehemence and the impending visit; and, before any more could be said, the door opened, and the two Miss Crutchleys appeared.

Wonderful women these Miss Crutchleys were. Though sisters, they were totally unlike in manner and appearance. The eldest was an imposing-looking lady, rustling in stiff black silk, with a voice like a man, and a face like an eagle; and she advanced towards me with a prancing kind of step. The second, Miss Letitia Crutchley (she looked like Letty), had not given up all pretension to be considered a young lady. She had a drab-coloured gown, a drab-coloured face, drab-coloured hair, and no specially remarkable eyes; she was without stiffness, and without colour, and had a sort of unhappy, dilapidated appearance. Rushing past her sister, she came close up to me, saying, in a high, shrill voice, 'Sister's so deaf, quite deaf, indeed; but she'll hear what you say through her trumpet;' and she uncoiled the formidable-looking black serpent which was round her sister's arm, and put it into my hand, and, in so doing, overthrew my work-basket and all its contents, including innumerable reels of cotton, upon the floor.

'Law! I'm so sorry,' she exclaimed, as she flung herself on her hands and knees to pick them up, totally disregarding my assurances that it was of no consequence. 'Well, now, I'm so vexed,' she soliloquized. 'It's so awkward on a first visit. But,' added she, in a louder tone, 'I hope there is no great harm done. Now let us sit down and talk. We have been coming to see you ever so many times. I said to sister, "Law, how odd they'll think it we don't call;" but every day we saw you go out,

and for so long, that you did not seem settled; but when we saw the Cumberleys' carriage I could put it off no longer, for, as I said, "I'm sure they'll be real acquisitions here." Didn't I, sister?" she said, screaming into the trumpet.

I took the obnoxious-looking snake into my hand, feeling it impossible to follow Miss Letitia in her rambling, free-and-easy way of talking, but utterly unconscious how to begin a conversation with the trumpet. My husband had escaped amid the confusion of picking up the balls of cotton; and I had both ladies to entertain. However, everything has an end. I did my best, and rejoiced when the visit was over, and determined that some time should elapse before I returned it, and that when I did, it should be in such a manner as would not encourage any prospects of future intimacy.

I let a week elapse before I proposed to my husband to return the visit, and then came downstairs dressed in bonnet and shawl, and armed with an umbrella.

"Where are you going?" he asked, in amazement.

"To call on the Miss Crutchleys. Perhaps my appearing before them in this manner may disabuse their minds of the idea of running in and out of our rooms when they have nothing else to do, which I saw was their intention."

"Heaven forefend!" he exclaimed; "and what can I do?—wear a great coat, or keep my hat on? for they are sure to be at home to-day."

"Nothing; you had better not come; only leave it to me;" and I have reason to believe that I managed the visit sufficiently well to guard against a similar annoyance being speedily repeated.

Soon after this occurrence we went to London; and as my maid informed me the Miss Crutchleys were going to the sea, I congratulated myself on the prospect of having the house to ourselves when we returned. It was now hot summer weather; and I was really glad to escape from the heat and noise of London, and intended, as I told my husband, to live out of doors. I

brought down a box of books from Mudie's, and imagined myself sitting all day under the walnut tree in the small garden in front of our lodgings. Vain and futile anticipation! As I drove up to the door I found that my plan had been forestalled by two men, who were lying on the grass under this very tree, and smoking.

"Are the other rooms let?" I asked of the maid who opened the door.

"Oh yes, ma'am; we are quite full now," and she spoke as if she were telling me the best news in the world. "Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd, and three children, and two nurses."

I said nothing, but wished myself back in London again.

The annoyance was even greater than I expected, for the smell of their cigars came into our rooms, and to remain at home was as intolerable as to go out.

Wearied, mortified, and disappointed, I retired to rest, and soon fell asleep; but before the faintest gleam of daylight found its way through my shutterless windows, I was awakened by what, in my half-dreamy state, I supposed to be the mewing of some cat in distress. But by degrees I became alive to the fact that it was the faint cry of an infant apparently in pain, and refusing to be comforted; and this continued through the night with but little, if any, intermission.

As soon as my maid entered to call me in the morning, I asked her if there was not a sick child in the house.

"Yes, to be sure, ma'am, there is indeed, and it has cried pretty well all night. It is in the next room to mine, and I wonder who is to get a wink of sleep in this place, for there is a canary bird in the room below that's been singing or screaming, whichever it is, ever since daybreak. I am sure my head is ready to split, and who is to live like this I don't know, for I am sure I can't." And she drew up the blind with a jerk which let the full flood of sunlight into my eyes, and then, in the worst possible humour, banged out of the room.

I did not much wonder, and went down to breakfast in no very plea-

sant mood. Then again I found the fumes of tobacco pervading every part of the house. I indignantly sent for Mrs. Johnson, the woman to whom the house belonged, and told her that I could not bear it, and that she should not allow smoking in her house.

I only received an insolent answer, and an assurance that 'people in lodgings must take their chance, and that she had no intention of interfering with what the gentlemen chose to do out of the house.'

I replied that if lodgings became unbearable from annoyances of this kind, people must be expected to leave them at a moment's notice. I, for one, certainly would not remain there. A saucy smile was the only reply, and I went to look for my husband; but I could not get as much sympathy from him as I expected. He said it was 'probably accidental; he had not perceived the smell—indeed he rather liked it than otherwise.'

'But I don't. I can't be expected to bear it. I have told Mrs. Johnson that nothing shall make me remain here; so I can write to St. Leonards, or Ryde, if you like it better, by to-day's post. I dare say we shall be more comfortable there.'

'But we have taken these rooms,' he replied, in a tone of great vexation. 'You seemed to like the place; and all lodgings are so exorbitantly dear when it is the season, that I made a bargain to remain six months longer here at the same price.'

'Six months longer in this horrible place!' I exclaimed, indignantly; 'why, before I consented to lead this sort of life at all, it was expressly understood that we should move from place to place as we chose. I really think you might have consulted me before you made such an arrangement.'

'I am sorry you dislike it; but I dare say these people will go; and the child who disturbed you so much at night may soon get well.'

'I only wish you did not sleep through everything,' I exclaimed, in great vexation, 'and then, perhaps, you would know what it is to have no rest after a long fatiguing journey. If these people go away,

others just as objectionable will probably come.'

'I can't help that. I do not see that there is so much to complain of in our present way of life. At all events, I cannot pay for two sets of lodgings at once.'

'Very well,' I replied: 'I have no doubt that before the six months have expired you will find that "life in lodgings" is not quite so enjoyable as you appear to think at present. In the mean time, I must try and pacify Simmonds; for I don't believe she will endure it much longer.'

'Let her go, then, for heaven's sake; there are plenty of maids to be got.'

'Probably; but none that will suit me so well: so I shall offer her an increase of wages as an inducement to stay with us till we return to London.'

I persuaded Simmonds to be patient under the difficulties of her life; and everything went on for a time in the usual way; till one morning my husband rushed upstairs, declaring that he must bring his books into my room, for he could not remain below a moment longer.

'I ought to be very much flattered, then, at your coming to sit with me: but what's the matter?'

'I am telling you. I am driven away by the most horrible smell. I am positively sick with it still.'

'Dear me! have you never discovered that before? Why I have smelt it constantly in wet weather.'

'In wet weather!' he exclaimed; 'then it must arise from defective drainage—the most unwholesome—the most dangerous thing! Why did not you speak about it? I have never felt well lately; and no doubt that is the reason.'

My husband was very nervous and fidgetty about his health.

'I never speak of anything now,' I replied. 'I supposed we were to bear with every kind of annoyance in this charming mode of existence.'

'Pshaw! You ought to have complained at once. I will go downstairs and see about it.'

Presently he returned, with books and writing-materials under his arm,

and no very pleased expression of countenance.

'Well, what is it?' I inquired.

'Whatever it is, there is not much hope of getting it remedied; for they say that so much has been already spent upon the house, that they won't spend another farthing, but that I may do it if I please.'

'That would be worse than paying for two sets of lodgings,' I said, decidedly, 'and therefore must not be thought of.'

'I don't suppose that we are obliged to bear such an infernal nuisance,' he said, angrily, as he left the room.

From that time my husband never appeared well. Whether he fancied the house unwholesome, or whether there was any other cause for it, it is certain that he was continually ailing. He became worse instead of better, and one night had an attack that greatly alarmed me; so much so that I sent off at once for the nearest medical man. Under his care he soon rallied; but still from time to time, and from no apparent cause, he had a recurrence of the same kind of illness.

It was a case that quite baffled the doctor's skill. He could not at all account for it; and I began to be afraid it might be the beginning of some grave malady. I had mentioned the defective drainage; but the doctor thought that the symptoms pointed to some other cause, though doubtless that might aggravate them. The place was considered remarkably healthy; the weather was dry and mild: we could not trace his illness to any assignable cause. One day, after a long visit, Dr. Proby leant back in his chair, knitted his brows, and fixing his eyes upon my husband's face, as if determined to fathom the mystery of his illness, exclaimed,

'Baked meat! Do you have your meat baked? If you do, that is probably the cause of your sufferings.'

'I believe we do,' I replied: 'at least the meat here is quite different to any I ever tasted before; but I will ask.'

'I did so; and received an answer in the affirmative.'

'Dreadful! most pernicious prac-

tice; would ruin any man's digestion; must not be for a moment, my dear sir. Pray have it attended to, and I will call again, and I shall expect that, in a very short time, you will be quite a different being.'

And, delighted at the discovery, the good fussy little doctor bustled out of the room.

'Will you speak about this at once, my dear? I have no doubt that Dr. Proby is right, and that this has been the cause of all I have suffered. I have often heard that nothing is more pernicious to the digestion than baked meat.'

Again was Mrs. Johnson summoned; and we made a request, rather in trepidation, that in future our meat might be roasted before the fire.

I saw a storm was impending, for the lady's face became scarlet, and I could scarcely finish my sentence before she broke into a torrent of expostulation and anger, declaring that 'She had kept a lodging-house for twenty years, and no one had ever found fault with her cooking before; that she could not, and would not alter it; for, with all she had to do, it would be a fine thing if she had everybody's meat to roast. She was sure the meat did very well.'

'No, it does not, for it has made Mr. Plantagenet very ill,' I said, quietly.

'Them as don't like it may leave it, then, for I shall do no other,' was her insolent reply, as she walked out of the room in a state of high wrath and indignation.

What was to be done? I could only tell my husband, and leave it to him to determine whether he would stay or go. I am happy to say that this last difficulty has quite sickened him of his present way of life, and that he is as anxious as I can be for the termination of the six months for which he so rashly engaged himself.

I am bearing my purgatory as well as I can; and I hope that by writing this short account of my experience of 'Life in Lodgings,' I may be the means of saving some of my fellow-creatures from a similar delusion, and similar discomfort and suffering.

BILLINGSGATE AT FIVE IN THE MORNING.

SUMMER or winter, light or dark, rain or shine, it matters not; as the clock strikes five, the bell rings, and the market opens. The Clerk of the Market, the representative of the Corporation, is there, to act the part of major-domo; the vessels are there, hauled up in tiers in the river, laden with their silvery cargoes; the porters are there, running to and fro between the ships and the market; the railway vans and carts are there, with fish brought from the several railway stations; the salesmen are there, at their stands or benches; and the buyers are there, ready to buy and pay. As yet all is tolerably clean. There is, of course, that 'fish-like smell' which Trinculo speaks of; but Billingsgate dirt and Billingsgate vilification have not yet commenced. The street dealers, the costermongers or 'costers,' have not yet made their appearance; they wait till their 'betters,' the regular fishmongers, have paid good prices for choice fish; and then they rush in to purchase everything that is left. It is a wonderful scene, even at this early hour. How Thames Street can contain all the railway vans that throng it is a marvel. From Paddington, from Camden, from King's Cross, from Shoreditch, from Fenchurch Street, from the depôts over the water, these vehicles arrive in numbers perfectly bewildering. Every one wants to get the prime of the market; every salesman tells his clients that good prices depend almost as much on early arrival as on fine quality; and thus every cargo of fish is pushed on to market with as little delay as need be. Pickford objurgates Chaplin and Horne, Macnamara is wrathful at Parker, every van is in every other van's way. Fish Street-hill and Thames Street, Pudding Lane and Botolph Lane, Love Lane and Darkhouse Lane, all are one jam and muddle, horses entangled in shafts, and shafts in wheels. A civilian, a non-fishman, has no business there at such a time; woe to his black coat or black hat, if he

stands in the path of the porters; he will have a finny sprinkling before he can well look about him; or perhaps the tail of a big fish will flap in his face, or lobsters' claws will threaten to grapple him.

It was always thus at Billingsgate, even before the days of railways, and before Mr. Bunning built the present market—a structure not without elegance on the river front; but the street arrangements are becoming more crowded and difficult to manage every year. In the old days, when trains and locomotives were unthought of, nearly all the fish reached Billingsgate by water. The broad-wheeled waggons were too slow to bring up the perishable commodity in good time; while the mail and passenger coaches, even if the passengers had been willing (which they would not) to submit to the odour, could not have brought up any large amount of fish. At an intermediate period, say about 1830 or 1835, certain bold traders, at some of our seaport towns, put on four-horse fast vans, which brought up cargoes of fish during the night, and deposited them at Billingsgate before five in the morning; but this was a costly mode of conveyance, which could not safely be incurred except for the best and high-priced fish. When it became an established fact that railways could bring up fish in any quantity, and in a few hours, from almost any port in England, the effect was striking; the supply at Billingsgate became regular instead of intermitting; and the midland towns, such as Birmingham and Wolverhampton, were placed within reach of supplies that were literally unattainable under the old system. It used to be a very exciting scene at the river side at Billingsgate. As the West-end fishmongers are always willing to pay well for the earliest and choicest fish, the owners of the smacks and other boats had a strong incentive to arrive early at 'the Gate;' those who came first were absolutely certain of obtaining the best prices for their fish; the

laggards had to content themselves with what they could get. If there happened to be a very heavy haul of any one kind of fish on any one day, the disproportion of price was still more marked; for as there were no electric telegraphs to transmit the news, the salesmen had no certain means of knowing that a large supply was forthcoming; they sold, and the crack fishmongers bought, the first cargo at good prices; and when the bulk of the supply arrived, there was no adequate demand at the market. In such a state of things there is no such process as holding back, no warehousing till next day; the fish must all be sold—if not for pounds, for shillings; if not for shillings, for pence. Any delay in this matter would lead to the production of such attacks upon the olfactory nerves as would speedily call for the interference of the officer of health. In what way a glut in the market is disposed of we shall explain presently.

It is really wonderful to see by how many routes, and from what varied sources, fish now reach Billingsgate. The smack owners, sharpening their wits at the rivalry of railways, do not 'let the grass grow under their feet;' they call steam to their aid, and get the fish up to market with a celerity which their forefathers would not have dreamed of. Take the Yarmouth region, for instance. The fishermen along the Norfolk and Suffolk coast congregate towards the fishing-banks in the North Sea in such number that their vessels form quite a fleet. They remain out two, three, four, or even so much as six weeks, never once coming to land in the interval. A fast-sailing cutter, or a steamer, visits the bank or station every day, carrying out provisions and stores to the fishermen, and bringing back the fish that have been caught. Thus laden, the cutter or steamer puts on all her speed, and brings the fish to land, to Yarmouth, to Harwich, or even right up to Billingsgate, according as distance, wind, and tide may show to be best. If to Yarmouth or Harwich, a 'fish train' is made up every night, which brings the catch to

Shoreditch station, whence vans carry it to Billingsgate. There used, in the olden days, to be fish vans from those eastern parts, which, on account of the peculiar nature of the service, were specially exempted from post-horse duty. As matters now are, the fishermen, when the richness of the shoal is diminished, return to shore after several weeks, to mend their nets, repair their vessels, and refresh themselves after their arduous labours. At all the fishing towns round the coast, the telegraphic wire has furnished a wonderful aid to the dealers; for it announces to the salesmen at Billingsgate the quantity and description of fish *en route*, and thereby enables them to decide whether to sell it all at Billingsgate, or to send some of it at once to an inland town. This celerity in railway conveyance and in telegraphic communication gives rise to many curious features in the fish-trade. Tourists and pleasure-seekers at Brighton, Hastings, and other coast towns, are often puzzled to understand the fact that fish, although caught and landed near at hand, is not cheaper there than in London: nay, it sometimes happens that good fish is not obtainable either at a high price or low. The explanation is to be sought in the fact that a market is certain at Billingsgate, uncertain elsewhere. A good catch of mackerel off Hastings might be too large to command a sale on the spot; whereas if sent up to the great centre the salesmen would soon find purchasers for it. It is, in a similar way, a subject of vexation in the salmon districts that the best salmon are so uniformly sent to London as to leave only the secondary specimens for local consumption. The dealers *will* go to the best market that is open to them; and it is of no avail to be angry thereat. It is said that few families are more insufficiently supplied with vegetables than those living near market-gardens; the cause being similar to that here under notice. Perhaps the most remarkable fact, however, in connection with this subject is, that the fish often make a double journey, say from Brighton

to Billingsgate and back again. The Brighton fishermen and the Brighton fishmonger do not deal one with another so much as might be supposed; the one sends to Billingsgate to sell, the other to buy; and each is willing to incur a little expense for carriage to insure a certain market.

Of course the marketing peculiarities depend in some degree on the different kinds of fish, obtainable, as they are, in different parts of the sea, and under very varying circumstances. Yarmouth sends up chiefly herrings—caught by the drift-net in deep water, or the seine-net in shallow—sometimes a hundred tons in a night. The north of England, and a large part of Scotland, consign more largely salmon to the Billingsgate market. These salmon mostly come packed in ice, in boxes, of which the London and North Western and the Great Northern Railway Companies are intrusted with large numbers; or else in welled steamers. The South Western is more extensively the line for the mackerel trade; while pilchards find their way upon the Great Western. But this classification is growing less and less definite every year: most of the kinds of fish are now landed at many different ports which have railway communication with the metropolis; and the railway companies compete with each other too keenly to allow much diversity in carriage charges. The up-river fish, such as plaice, roach, dace, &c., come down to Billingsgate by boat, and are, it is said, bought more largely by the Jews than by other classes of the community. The rare, the epicurean white-bait, so much prized by cabinet ministers, aldermen, and others, who know the mysteries of the taverns at Blackwall and Greenwich, are certainly a piscatorial puzzle; for they are caught in the dirty part of the Thames between Blackwall and Woolwich, in the night-time, at certain seasons of the year, and are yet so delicate although the water is so dirty. The oyster trade was noticed in a former number of '*London Society*,'* in reference to the remark-

able system of oyster *nurseries*, the care with which the beds are managed at Whitstable and thereabouts, the mode of sending the oysters up to Billingsgate, and the sharing of the proceeds among the fishermen. Suffice it here to say that the smacks and other vessels, when they arrive, are moored in front of the wharf, to form what is called '*Oyster Street*.' The 4th of August is still '*oyster day*,' as it used to be, and is still a wonderful day of bustle and excitement at Billingsgate; but oysters now manage to reach London in other ways before that date, and the traditional formality is not quite so decided as it once was. Lobsters come in vast numbers even from so distant a locality as the shores of Norway, the fiords or firths of which are very rich in that kind of fish. They are brought by swift vessels across the North Sea to Grimsby, and thence by the Great Northern Railway to London. Other portions of the supply are obtained from the Orkney and Shetland coasts, and others from the Channel Islands. It has been known, on rare occasions, that *thirty thousand* lobsters have reached Billingsgate in one day; but, however large the number may be, all find a market, the three million mouths in the metropolis, and the many additional millions in the provinces, having capacity enough to devour them all. There are some queer-looking places in Darkhouse Lane and Love Lane, near Billingsgate, where the lobsters and crabs undergo that boiling process which changes their colour from black to red. A basketful of lobsters is plunged into a boiling caldron and kept there twenty minutes. As to the poor crabs, they are first killed by a prick with a needle, for else they would dash off their claws in the convulsive agony occasioned by the hot water! Sprats '*come in*,' as it is called, about the 9th of November; and there is an ineradicable belief that the chief magistrate of the City of London always has a dish of sprats on the table at the Guildhall banquet on Lord Mayor's Day. The shoals of this fish being very uncertain, and the

* See vol. iii., p. 561.

fish being largely bought by the working classes of London, the sprat excitement at Billingsgate, when there has been a good haul, is something marvellous. Soles are brought mostly by trawling-boats belonging to Barking, which fish in the North Sea, and which are owned by several companies; or rather, the trawlers catch the fish, and then smart, fast-sailing cutters bring the fish up to Billingsgate. Eels, of the larger and coarser kind, patronized by eel-pie makers and cheap soup-makers, mostly come in heavy Dutch boats, where they writhe and dabble about in wells or tanks full of water; but the more delicate eels are caught nearer home. Cod are literally 'knocked on the head' just before being sent to Billingsgate. A 'dainty live cod' is of course not seen in the London fishmongers' shops, and still less in the barrow of the costermonger; but, nevertheless, there is an attempt made to approach as near to this liveliness as may be practicable. The fish, brought alive in welled vessels, are dexterously killed by a blow on the head, and sent up directly to Billingsgate by rail, when the high-class fishmongers buy them at once, before attending to other fish. We may be sure that there is some adequate reason for this, known to and admitted by the initiated. The fish caught by the trawl-net, such as turbot, brill, soles, plaice, haddock, skate, halibut, and dabs, are very largely caught in the sandbanks which lie off Holland and Denmark. The trawl net is in the form of a large bag open at one end; this is suspended from the stern of the fishing-lugger, which drags it at a slow pace over the fishing-banks. Two or three hundred vessels are out at once on this trade, remaining sometimes three or four months, and sending their produce to market in the rapid vessels already mentioned. The best kinds of trawl-fish, such as turbot, brill, and soles, are kept apart, separate from the plaice, haddock, skate, &c., which are regarded as inferior. The 'costers' buy the haddock largely, and clean and cure them; they (or other persons) also buy the plaice, clean

them, cut them up, fry them in oil, and sell them for poor people's suppers. The best trawl-fish are gutted before being packed, or the fishmongers will have nothing to do with them. Concerning mackerel, a curious change has taken place within a year or two. Fine large mackerel are now sent all the way from Norway, packed in ice in boxes, like salmon, landed at Grimsby or some other eastern port, and then sent onward by rail. The mackerel on our own coast seem to have become smaller than of yore, and thus this new Norwegian supply is very welcome.

All these varieties of fish alike, then, and others not here named, are forwarded to the mighty metropolitan market for sale. And here the reader must bear in mind that the real seller does not come into personal communication with the real buyer. As at Mark Lane, where the cornfactor comes between the farmer and the miller; as at the Coal Exchange, where the coalfactor acts as an intermedium between the pit-owner and the coal-merchant; as at the cattle market, where the Smithfield (so called) salesman conducts the sales from the grazier to the butcher—so at Billingsgate does the fish-salesman make the best bargain he can for the fisherman, and take the money from the fishmonger. More than two thousand years ago, according to the Rev. Mr. Badham, there were middlemen of this class, and men, too, of no little account in their own estimation and in the estimation of the world. This lively writer, in his 'Fish Tattle,' says: 'Great fortunes were often realized by the Greek salesmen, many of whom came to keep villas, and to live in style. The name of one great salt-fish seller was enrolled in the city [Athens?] books, and his two sons enjoyed the like honour. Many others besides them, who carried on the same traffic, had to bless Fate and the gods that they were born when the sun was in Pisces. The craft, always a prosperous one, has in more modern days been greatly indebted to the Church of Rome for its present status and importance. It was, no

doubt, the great consumption of fish during Lent which led principally to the opulence of the traders, and eventually to those curious privileges which were enjoyed by their body at home and abroad.'

We have not the slightest doubt that some of the Billingsgate salesmen do that which those of Greece are said by Mr. Badham to have done—'keep villas, and live in style.' Doubtless they have good dinners and good wines, stately wives and fashionable daughters out somewhere Southgate or Clapton way; and when papa has taken off his apron, washed away the fish-scales, and made himself otherwise presentable, he returns to the bosom of his family after the day's labours are ended. He is, however, not like other City men; he *must* be at business by five in the morning, and his work is ended by eleven or twelve o'clock. They all assemble, many scores of them, in time for the ringing of the market-bell at five o'clock. Each has his stand, for which a rental is paid to the corporation; and as there are always more applicants for stands than stands to give them, the privilege is a valued one. Some of these salesmen have shops in Thames Street, or in the neighbouring lanes and alleys; but the majority have only stands in Billingsgate. Some deal mostly in one kind of fish only, some take all indiscriminately. In most cases (as we have said), each, when he comes to business in the morning, has the means of knowing what kind and quantity of fish will be consigned to him for sale. The electric telegraph does all this work, while we laggards are fast asleep. Of the seven hundred regular fishmongers in the metropolis, how many attend Billingsgate we do not know; but it is probable most of them do so, as by no other means can proper purchases be made. At any rate, the number of fishmongers' carts within a furlong or so of the market is something enormous. The crack fishmongers go to the stalls of the salesmen who habitually receive consignments of the best fish; and as there is not much haggling about price, a vast amount of trade is con-

ducted within the first hour or two. Porters bring in the hampers and boxes of fine fish, the fishmongers examine them rapidly, and the thing is soon done. Of course, anything like a regular price of fish is out of the question; the supply varies greatly, and the price varies with the supply. The salesman does the best he can for his client, and the fishmonger does the best he can for himself.

But the liveliest scene at Billingsgate, the fun of the affair, is when the costermongers come. This may be at seven o'clock or so, after the 'dons' have taken off the fish that command a high price. How many there are of these costermongers it would be impossible to say, because the same men (and women) deal in fruit and vegetables from Covent Garden, or in fish from Billingsgate, according to the abundance or scarcity of different commodities. Somehow or other, by some kind of freemasonry among themselves, they contrive to learn, in a wonderfully short space of time, whether there is a good supply of herrings, sprats, mackerel, &c., at the 'Gate,' and they will flock down thither literally by thousands. The men and boys all wear caps—leather, hairy, felt, cloth, anything will do; but a cap it must be, a hat would not be orthodox. The intensity displayed by these dealers is very marked and characteristic; they have only a few shillings each with which to speculate, and they must so manage these shillings as to get a day's profit out of their transactions. They do not buy of the principal salesmen. There is a class called by the extraordinary name of *bommarees* or *bummarecs* (for what reason even the 'oldest inhabitant' could not tell), who buy largely from the leaders in the trade, and then sell again to the peripatetics—the street dealers. They are not fishmongers; they buy and sell again during the same day, and in the market itself. The bommaree, perched on his rostrum (which may be a salmon-box or a herring-barrel), summons a group of costermongers around him, and puts up lot after lot for sale. There

is a peculiar lingo adopted, only in part intelligible to the outer world—a shouting and vociferating that seems to be part of the system. The owners of the hairy caps are eagerly grouped into a mass, inspecting the fish; and every man or boy makes a wonderfully rapid calculation of the probable price that it would be

worth his while to go to. The salesman, or bommaree, has no auctioneer's hammer; he brings the right palm down with a clap upon the left to denote that a lot has been sold; and the fishy money goes from the costermonger's fishy hand into the bommaree's fishy hand with the utmost promptness. Most of the

dried-fish salesmen congregate under the arcade in front of the market; most of the dealers in periwinkles, cockles, and mussels (which are bought chiefly by women), in the basement story, where there are tubs of these shell-fish almost as large as brewers' vats; but the other kinds of fish are sold in the great market

—a quadrangular area covered with a roof supported by pillars, and lighted by skylights. The world knows no such fishy pillars elsewhere as these; for every pillar is a leaning-post for salesmen, bommarees, porters, costermongers, baskets, hampers, and fish-boxes.

And now the reader may fairly

ask, what is the quantity of fish which in a day, or in a year, or any other definite period, is thus sold at Billingsgate? Echo answers the question; but the Clerk of the Market does not, will not, cannot. We are assured by the experienced and observant Mr. Deering, who has filled this post for many years, that all statements on this particular subject must necessarily be mere guesses. No person whatever is in possession of the data. There are many reasons for this. In the first place, there are no duties on fish, no customs on the imported fish, nor excise on that caught on our own coasts; and therefore there are no official books of quantities and numbers. In the second place, there is no regularity in the supply; no fisherman or fishmonger, salesman or bommaree, can tell whether to-morrow night's catch will be a rich or a poor one. In the third place, the Corporation of the City of London do not charge market-dues according to the quantity of fish sold or brought in for sale; so much per van or waggon, so much per smack or cutter, so much per stand in the market—these are the items charged for. In the fourth place, each salesman, knowing his own amount of business, is not at all likely to mention that amount to other folks. Out of (say) a hundred of them, each may form a guess of the extent of business transacted by the other ninety-nine; but we should have to compare a hundred different guesses, to test the validity of each. Nor could the carriers assist us much; for if every railway company, and every boat or steamer owner, were even so communicative as to tell how many loads of fish had been conveyed to Billingsgate in a year, we should still be far from knowing the quantities of each kind that made up the aggregate. On these various grounds it is believed that the annual trade of Billingsgate cannot be accurately stated. Some years ago Mr. Henry Mayhew, in a series of remarkable articles in the 'Morning Chronicle,' gave a tabulated statement of the probable amount of this trade; and about five or six years later, Dr. Wynter,

in the 'Quarterly Review,' quoted the opinion of some Billingsgate authority, that the statement was probably not in excess of the truth. We will therefore give the figures, the reader being quite at liberty to marvel at them as much as he likes:—

Salmon . . .	29,000 boxes, 7 in a box.
Cod, live . .	400,000, averaging 10 lb. each.
„ barrelled .	15,000 barrels, 50 to a barrel.
„ salt. . .	1,600,000, averaging 5 lb. each.
Haddocks . .	2,470,000, at 2 lb. each.
Do., smoked .	65,000 barrels, 300 to a barrel.
Soles	97,520,000, at 4 lb. each.
Mackerel . .	23,620,000, at 1 lb. each.
Herrings . .	250,000 barrels, at 150 each.
Do., red. . .	100,000 barrels, at 500 each.
Do., bloaters .	265,000 baskets, at 150 each.
Eels	9,000,000, at 6 to 1 lb.
Whiting . .	17,920,000, at 6 oz. each.
Plaice . . .	36,600,000, at 1 lb. each.
Turbot . . .	800,000, at 7 lb. each.
Brill	} 1,220,000, at 3 lb. each.
Mullet . . .	
Oysters . . .	500,000,000, at 400 to a peck.
Crabs. . . .	600,000.
Lobsters . .	1,200,000.
Prawns . . .	12 tons, at 120 to 1 lb.
Shrimps . .	192,295 gallons, at 320 to a pint.

These figures nearly take one's breath away. What on earth becomes of the shells of the five hundred million oysters, and the hard red coats of the eighteen hundred thousand lobsters and crabs, besides the shells of the mussels, cockles, and winkles, which are not here enumerated? Another learned authority, Mr. Braithwaite Poole, when he was goods manager of the London and North Western Railway Company, brought the shell-fish as well as the other fish into his calculations, and startled us with such quantities as fifty million mussels, seventy million cockles, three hundred million periwinkles, five hundred million shrimps, and twelve hundred million herrings. In short, putting this and that together, he told us that about four thousand million fish, weighing a quarter of a million tons, and bringing two million sterling, were sold annually at Billingsgate! Generally speaking, Mr. Poole's figures make a tolerably near approach to those of Mr. Mayhew; and therefore it *may* possibly be that we Londoners—men and women, boys, girls, and babies—after supplying country folks, eat

about two fish each every average day, taking our fair share between turbot, salmon, and cod at one end of the series, and sprats, periwinkles, and shrimps at the other. Not a little curious is this ichthyophagous estimate. If Mr. Frank Buckland, Mr. Francis, and the other useful men who are endeavouring to improve and increase the artificial rearing of fish, should succeed in their endeavours, we

shall, as a matter of course, make an advance as a fish-eating people. And on this matter we may say, that if the reader wants to know where to get first-rate fish, well dressed and well served, he may wend his steps some day to one of the fish ordinaries at Billingsgate, at such hostelries as the 'Three Tuns,' the 'Queen's Head,' or the 'Anti-gallican.'

ONCE IN A LIFE.

WE sat beneath a summer sky,
All round us summer sunshine lay;
We sat together in the bay,
My sweetheart Kate and I.

O! there was throbbing at my heart,
And in my soul the pain was great;
I spoke, 'We sail to-morrow, Kate,
And you and I must part.'

In mine my darling laid her hand;
'Trust me!' with faithful lips she said;
Ah! there were never lips so red
And sweet in all the land!

I know not how these things may be,
But, while she answered, like a spell
The wailing thunder rose and fell
And died across the sea.

Closer in mine she stole her hand,
And two soft eyes looked up and down,
Ah! there were never eyes so brown
And deep in all the land!

'Look, sweetheart, look!' she said; 'I heard
The storm!' O me! all round the bay
The seething clouds were high and gray;
I looked and spoke no word.

But fast in mine I griped her hand,
And rained my kisses on her hair;
Ah! there were never curls so fair
And golden in the land!

We parted. O! the lifelong pain
That from that day of parting grew!
'Sweetheart,' she said, 'I will be true
Till death shall part us twain!'

O! would I had been wrecked at sea,
And tossed and torn by waves and wind,
Or ever I came home to find
My Kate no more to me!

Or ever I came home again
 My winsome Kate was dead—was dead !
 'Till death shall part us twain,' she said—
 'Till death shall part us twain.'

Here, where she lies alone, I stand,
 And in my soul hot pulses beat ;
 Ah ! there was never one so sweet
 To me in all the land !

Strange fatal clouds across the sea !
 Strange, bitter day that saw us part !
 For hope is dead within my heart,
 And never more shall be !

No more !—I shall behold her face
 No more ! The shadows round me creep,
 Love ! I would lay me down and sleep
 With thee a little space.

ARTISTS' NOTES FROM CHOICE PICTURES.

Le Chapeau de Brigand.

THE painter of the *Chapeau de Brigand* is not one of our great masters—not by any means a painter of the first rank, even among English painters ; nor is the picture one that he would have selected as representative of his powers. But as we don't confine our reading to great authors, or look only at the principal books of the secondary men, so with painters and their paintings, we often find pleasure in minor works and smaller artists, when the great and the profound would be felt as vapid or wearisome. And the chances are that these minor works are the best as well as the pleasantest. To very few is it given to ascend the highest heaven of invention ; but most men are safe when not soaring. Icarus or Mr. Cocking might have been trusted with a job hack or a Worthing car, with little risk of broken neck or melted wing.

Uwins, a Londoner, and trained in London—or, to be strictly accurate, let me say, born just outside the great city, on Hermes Hill—sweetly rural mount it seemed to native eyes—hill of classic name but cockney memory ; for it owed its title not to reverence of god Mercury, but Doctor de Valangin, a

very different sort of personage, and stood over against the gardens not of Academe but White Conduit House—Uwins, born on Hermes Hill, educated at Islington, and apprenticed in Somers Town, grew up in that hearty unaffected love of simple country sights and manners which was so distinctive of the lower middle-class Londoner, born on the other side of 1800, and to which we owe the making of many an admirable painter, and much of the fresh unsophisticated breath of nature which animates their pictures. Enjoying the country—that favourite old-fashioned cockneyism exactly expressed the feeling—and liking to watch the employments and amusements of the country people, Uwins, when he turned painter, naturally depicted what he loved to observe ; hence his earliest pictures are plain country views ; and then, as he got accustomed to drawing the figure, followed 'Gleaners' and 'Higglers,' and 'Children gathering Raspberries,' 'Plaiting Straw,' or 'Shelling Peas ;' with 'Hop Gardens,' 'Hop Pickers,' and so forth : not 'high art,' certainly, but true art ; natural, honest, and charming.

Before he painted the *Chapeau de Brigand*, however, he had been to Italy, and,

during a six years' stay, had filled his head with Italian subjects and his house with Italian 'properties.' The subjects proved a sore temptation to him; the properties to some of his models. As long as he painted Italian scenes, and kept to homely every-day realities, all went pleasantly. In such pictures as 'Neapolitan Peasants going to a Festa,' or returning from one, 'An Italian Boy playing on the Mandoline to his Inamorata,' 'A Vintage,' or, most charming of all, an 'Italian Mother teaching her child the Tarantella,' he delighted every one. But when he undertook to introduce to them the veritable 'Merchant of Venice,' people felt that 'twas not the Jew that Shakspeare drew, and turned their backs on him. Nor were they more courteous to his other poetic imaginings. In his 'Sir Guyon' they refused to recognize the Prince of Grace. To his 'Ulysses' they gave no heed. His 'Cupid' they vowed was not their God of Love, nor 'Psyche' worthy to be immortal; whilst the 'Baptist' they pronounced an impostor, and 'Confession,' as plain John Bunyan said of 'the common salutation of women,' they 'could not away with.' Uwins bemoaned the degeneracy of the times, the neglect of poetry—that was, of *his* poetic painting—and the low condition of mental intelligence. It is a generation, he cried in his agony, that will heed only 'Anti-corn-law rhymes and railroad rhapsodies. The pleasures of imagination are at an end.'

But though it must have been hard for the painter to watch the people pass one or other of his poetic pictures, when hung at the Royal Academy, 'as if it was so much blank wall,' they were quite justified in their indifference. It *was* so much blank wall. And had Uwins gone on for ever, or say to the age of Old Parr, painting such pictures, they would have been only so much blank wall to the end.

Happily the 'Chapeau' is not one of these. Here we have a genuine picture. Not much in it—you read the story at a glance—but one that never fails to please when first seen, and never fails to please afterwards.

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The 'Chapeau de Brigand' was painted in 1838-9, and exhibited at the Royal Academy in the latter year. The Catalogue of the British Pictures in the National Gallery (among which the 'Chapeau' hangs) says that it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1843, but this is a mistake; it was the study for it that was exhibited then; the picture, as was said, appeared in 1839.

The picture tells its own story; but Uwins has told it in words as well as with the pencil. He had left the little girl, who had been serving as his model, alone for a while in his painting-room. She had seen those much-prized Italian 'properties' often, before, and wondered over them; often longed to examine them closely, and without anybody to see her and cry out 'Take care.' She looked and wondered now, tempted but resisting. Just the old story over again—

'What female heart can dress despise?

What cat's averse to fish?

Feminine nature can't hold out for ever against finery. 'That peacock's feather is so pretty, and the hat so funny; I wonder how I should look in it?' And so hat, and old woman's jacket, and petticoat, and whatever else a place can be found for, are put on one after the other; and lastly the rosary is taken, and the hands are adjusted by the saucy little hypocrite into a position of prim piety, and the head is drooped, when—in walks the Painter!

Caught in the very act, disconcerted, but not abashed, the little puss draws back a step or two, and waits expectant, wondering how her delinquency will be regarded, without lifting up her head, looking up from under the broad brim of the chapeau, with great dark doubting eyes, expectant, but ready to burst out in a blaze of merriment on finding the discoverer is not of wrathful mind.

Uwins, like the genial, kind-hearted man he was, entered heartily into the frolic, and little Miss, we may be sure, marked the day with white chalk. But he did more than laugh at the masquerade. He had caught and remembered that first

glance of the fairy. It would make a pretty picture, he thought, not take long to paint, and serve as a relief from the severer toils of escorting 'Psyche Returning from the Infernal Regions,' or soothing the 'Anxieties of Ulysses in the Island of Calypso.'

It made something more and better than the merely pretty picture he reckoned on. Her wicked little countenance has more virtue in it than the austerities of a score of his 'Holy Men;' is immeasurably lovelier than his second-hand Psyche, worth a wilderness of Judases. A bright, sunny, saucy face—cheerful itself, and making cheerful all who look on it. Innocent, she is yet sportive, and, like another Eve, enjoying the mischief the more because forbidden, loving the pleasure the more for its being a stolen one.

It is easy to see how it was that the painter has made so much of so ordinary an incident, and with such simple materials. He enjoyed the adventure, and he painted it with enjoyment. It was exactly suited to his tastes, and well within the limits of his powers. Every man's best pictures are those which are accordant with his innate sentiments and feelings. It is useless toiling and straining to produce something great. Invention is a wayward goddess, and seldom comes when bidden. Imagination is not to be urged. They visit only where there has been fitting preparation made for their entertainment, and they are assured of a congenial host. But they do not confine their calls to great occasions. Where there is no pretension they will drop in and assist at the humblest junket. Luckily for himself and for us, Uwins was content to take the circumstance as he saw it, and not try to elevate or idealize

it. It was, so to say, a momentary accident, and he knew how to avail himself of it. This is how the happiest pictures of children have been generally if not universally painted. You can't *place* children as models; you must take attitude and expression from them. All Reynolds's most successful portraits of children—and who else ever painted such exquisite ones?—were caught from the inspiration of the moment, the suggestion of a sudden movement,—some position or incident of the child's own. So in Fiammingo's matchless ivory carvings—very sweetly followed by Stothard, but lacking the original life and frolic—the inimitable gambolings of the children could only have been rendered from momentary glimpses of children actually at play.

And Uwins has treated the picture quite through in the spirit of the original idea. Lips and eyes and fingers all speak of glee suddenly checked, and resolutely kept down, but ready to break forth at the slightest encouragement. The child is full of health and overflowing with life. The pure clear skin, and bright eyes, and healthy hue, all tell the same tale. The countenance is shining in the full light of the sun, and shining with that pleasantest inner light, the sunshine of the heart.

The technical qualities of the work correspond well with the æsthetic. It is carefully painted, but there is no appearance of labour. Uwins had not the light facile touch of Reynolds, nor his marvellous sweetness and melody of colour. But the picture is daintily and tenderly handled, with something of an impromptu kind of treatment. The colour is clear and gay and festal. The whole bright, blooming, cheerful, redolent of life and suggestive of happiness.



'TRENTÉ-TROIS.'

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

'ROUGE GAGNE.'

MESSIEURS, faites le jeu!' chants the bald-headed croupier at the Trente-et-Quarante table, mechanically moistening his dexter thumb.

'Messieurs, faites le jeu!' he repeats, as rouleaux, and bank-notes, and loose pieces of gold and silver are tossed or punted on to the 'rouge' or the 'noire,' or staked upon the 'colour,' or against it.

'Le jeu est fait, messieurs? Rien ne va plus!'

The quick, lissome fingers deal the flimsy little cards on which so much is to depend; the low, monotonous voice counts the points as they fall.

'Dix-sept — vingt — vingt-cinq — trente — et dix!'—That is the result for the 'noire.'

'Onze — vingt — vingt-neuf — et trois — trente-deux, messieurs. Ah! — rouge gagne et couleur perd!'

The nimble rakes gather in their harvest from one side the table—it rains gold and silver, and bank-notes, and rouleaux on that division of the green cloth which is centred with a crimson diamond. The coup has been won and lost. The cards that have decided it are tossed into the ebony bowl in front of the dealer, and the game is made again. It is a still, sultry July night. The Lindenbad season is at its zenith, and the Salle de Jeux is crowded. They have flung wide open the long windows which give upon the asphalted terrace and the gardens, and through them the outer air comes, gratefully; bringing faint odours of the flowers with it. But the atmosphere within—heavy and close even in that lofty room—is but slightly relieved thereby. At the Trente-et-Quarante table yonder, where players and watchers of the game, representatives of well-nigh every European nationality, stand in ranks a dozen deep, the heat is something fearful. The 'inner ring'—the people sit-

ting in the chairs in front—are half-stifled by the pressure of the mass behind. The very croupiers, case-hardened veterans as they are, sigh and gasp wearily; and wiping unwonted moisture from their foreheads, look round longingly between each deal for their welcome relief. But the play goes on, fast and furious, notwithstanding. It is higher than usual to-night. Half a score of 'gros joueurs,' who play the highest stakes the bank allows, have been 'forcing the pace' for the last two hours, and it has begun to tell even on them. You can distinguish them easily among the crowd of smaller players by—for the most part, at least—that perfect impassibility of countenance which, win or lose, never forsakes them, and which only a long apprenticeship in Pandemonium can give them. Round about them men's faces flush and pale with the alternating chances of the game; white lips writhe in the gambler's malison, or strive to hide the inward agony by a stony smile. Women's features blanch and sharpen, after a ghastly fashion, under their paint and 'Blanc de Perles,' as the little pile of notes they have pledged their diamonds or their honour to obtain is risked and lost; or women's eyes gleam with a light that is not good to see, as white rounded arms and daintily-gloved hands are stretched forth to grasp the heap of double-friedrichs pushed towards them by the blandly-smiling croupier.

But the old hands—men and women—will break the bank and make no sign—lose their last rouleau, and never betray it by the quiver of an eyelid. Some of them are in a fair way to that utter consummation just now. There has been such a run of luck in favour of the bank as has been seldom witnessed in Lindenbad before. That

tall ungainly figure at the end of the table, with disordered hair, and tumbled linen, and careless travelling dress, gnawing his unkempt moustache, and muttering strange Anglo-Saxon oaths as a running accompaniment to his reckless play, has just 'dropped' the winnings of his last month at Homburg, and a small fortune besides, over the wrong colour. The croupier who makes the game looks towards him inquiringly before he deals again—the 'mad M.P.' is as well known in the Bads as in the 'House' at home—but the other shakes his head, and with a fierce anathema—which is actually so fierce as to make one or two people look up—stalks gloomily off, and will be seen no more till to-morrow. That black-haired, livid-faced man, with the flashing eyes, who looks like Mephistopheles, and is a well-known Spaniard, whom people point out to one another as 'the bank-breaker,' will come back to-morrow too, *without* those many diamond rings you see on his yellow fingers to-night, and try and recoup his losses once more. That big, bluff neighbour of his, who looks more like a Yorkshire yeoman than the bran-new Belgian baron he claims to be, has been backing the 'noire' steadily, and losing as steadily, every time. He crumples up the last half-dozen billets-de-banque in his note-case together, and tosses them on to the unlucky colour with his wonted placid smile. Half the table follows his example. The chances are, the men with martingales think, a hundred to one on the 'noire' this time. But the cards fall unkindly. 'Trente-six—trente-deux.' And again the red wins, and the bank reaps its harvest. There is yet another loser by that last coup, whom you must notice; for it is with her that this story is concerned. She is sitting beside that venerable-looking individual with the long white moustache, who, from his raised chair over against the officiating croupier, watches the players and the game, and pours the oil of his soothing tones on any troubled waters that may rise up round about him. You can see her face well from this side

the table; for her chin is resting on her gloved hand, and she is watching the result of the next round before she stakes again. A fair face, delicate and soft and pure-looking as tinted alabaster, half-framed in the silken masses of pale-golden hair which escape disordered from under her hat. Those large, blue, infantine eyes of hers give it a charmingly childish look—as *naïf* and innocent an air as though Madame la Comtesse de Vorazof were not, among other things, the most thorough-paced, unscrupulous, inveterate little gambler to be found at any fashionable 'hell' in Europe. That look and air consort perfectly with the frail-seeming, *mignonne* form you will see presently when she leaves the table, and which you would never dream could withstand the constant wear and tear of the keen excitement which day by day she finds more necessary. This fatal fondness for high play grows on one, you know; and the Vorazof isn't one to deny herself the gratification even of a caprice, no matter who or what has to pay its cost. She has indulged her passion for the *gros jeu* more freely than ever of late, though the cards have gone heavily against her; for she is of the number of those who hold that the pleasure next to that of winning is that of losing. She has, at any rate, experienced the latter amply. It is just as well, I fancy, that *ce cher Féodor*, as she calls the amiable barbarian, her husband, managed to come to grief about this time in one of his morning rides in the forest. His horse let him down rather heavily, and crushed his leg in the fall; so that Monsieur le Comte was a close prisoner on his sofa, and, except at stated hours, when *ce gros ours* chose to have her in his den to listen to his growls or to read him to sleep, the Vorazof was pretty well mistress of her time. Moreover, Monsieur was in blissful ignorance of the unpleasant amount of Madame's losses on the green cloth, and the straits to which those losses had reduced her. No one knew *that*, except Mademoiselle Fanchette, the Vorazof's *camériste*, who missed the opal necklace from its

écrin one night, and the discreet German Jew banker, who consented to advance the twenty thousand francs or so madame temporarily required on its ample security. But the *camériste* had the virtues, if she had the vices of her order, and was true as steel to her mistress here, as she had been on a dozen other occasions; and Herr Dornberg was only too happy to be of service to Madame la Comtesse, and locked up the transaction in his bosom, with others of a similar character, as closely as he locked up the jewels in his strong box. On the whole, the Vorazof had felt pretty safe. A run of luck might make all right again, and enable her to get back her opals before *ce monstre* (it was her playful way to call her husband by some *petit-nom* of this kind) should ask her why she never wore them. And by-and-by the run of luck *had* come. She won every coup for a while. She felt as if she were going to break the bank. Six times the sum she wanted for Herr Dornberg was stuffed into her note-case one night when she left the table on the play closing. She would get back her necklace next day, was her thought as she fell asleep. Unfortunately, that wise resolution was never carried into practice. The next day and the next, and the day after, found Madame still at her fascinating little game, fighting desperately against changed luck and mocking fortune, winning now and then, but losing nearly every big coup; till we see her, to-night, gathering herself together for one more effort, nerved to something like desperation by the recollection of certain ominous expressions *ce cher Féodor* made use of in a little *tête-à-tête conjugal* she had to endure this morning. Vorazof's temper, bad at its best, had been unusually disagreeable. His hurt, which tortured him horribly at times, might have been the cause; and his wife, as she smoothed his pillows and lavished all sorts of caresses and chatteries upon the invalid, fondly hoped it was. But she had a good many sins to answer for besides those little peccadilloes of the gaming-table, and as she

thought of them she trembled. Like all who belonged to Monsieur le Comte, she had good cause to dread his anger—always fierce and brutal as a wild beast's; and he had been more than angry, he had been furious. What was worst of all, his wife fancied she could detect signs of newly-awakened jealousy and suspicion in his fury, which very much alarmed her. Whether he had ground for either the Vorazof doubtless knew best; but when he mentioned the name of her last caprice, Vladimir de Laginski, she had found it, notwithstanding all her practice, difficult to school her voice and her face to the proper expression of wondering indifference. Then, too, the questions she had been dreading of late—the questions about the opal necklace, his gift—had been asked at last. She had laughed her silvery little laugh, called the by no means reassured Féodor half-a-dozen playfully-opprobrious names, and summoned Mademoiselle Fanchette. Who declared that she had taken the necklace herself for some trifling repair to Dotezio's, without troubling Madame in the matter. It would be finished, Mademoiselle Fanchette thought, in a day or two: sooner, of course, if Madame la Comtesse should wish to wear it.

'In that case, *chère amie*,' Vorazof had said, when the pearl of *caméristes* had retired—'in that case, you had better wear it at the De Rohan's ball, to-morrow night. Tu me comprends—n'est ce pas?' he added, with a malevolent grin. His wife shuddered inwardly. She had been warned, and she knew it. To disobey would be impossible after that. So she promised, in as careless a tone as she could command; and, by-and-by, left *ce pauvre* Féodor to smoke himself to sleep *with cigarettes au thé*, or find amusement and excitement in one of the pile of yellow-covered, strong-flavoured novels at his elbow.

'Vite! Fanchette—ce chapeau, ce voile!' the Vorazof said, in an altered, sharpened voice, as she came swiftly into her room two minutes later. Mdlle. Fanchette handed her mistress the disguise—for disguise to all intents and purposes it was—

she wanted, and the Comtesse went away straight to Herr Dornberg's. Whatever might be the cost, she must have that opal necklace to wear to-morrow night at the De Rohan's ball. The money she had with her would at least purchase her that much. Dornberg might take it again afterwards. He could scarcely refuse her this little arrangement, she thought, especially as she was prepared to pay for it. And even if he did refuse, one lucky coup might enable her to make the opals her own again before she needed them next day.

Herr Dornberg's polite *commis* received her as she entered the gloomy little *bureau-de-change*. He feared the Herr was absent from Lindenbad at the moment—would Madame take the trouble to sit down while he went to inquire? Madame did take that trouble, from absolute necessity; for her limbs trembled at this unlooked-for intelligence. Dornberg away!—What was she to do? for it was impossible to confide a delicate negotiation like the present to a third party. She shuddered as she thought of *ce cher l'écolier's* hints just now; at the notion that her little affair *had* been confided to a third party already. Was this a trap—this order to show herself in that fatal necklace—which the monster had laid for her? And if it was, how much did he know?—what would he do?

The Vorazof shuddered again as she thought of all he *might* do. She went in personal fear of that liege lord of hers, and hated him desperately in her heart: but she loved his wealth, and the place and rank and means of *bien-être* and enjoyment he gave her as his wife, too well not to feel, at this moment at all events, that it would be horrible to lose all this. Besides, she was beginning to grow tired even of Vladimir Laginski's *beaux yeux noirs*—she had thought them and him adorable a month ago—and it would be hard indeed to have to pay so heavy a price as utter ruin for a caprice which was ceasing to be amusing, and of which consequently she was quite ready to repent. No; she would get back those opals—

pierres de malheur that they were!—and be very cautious with Vladimir for the future, till she could safely break off their *liaison*. It was true he was divinely handsome, and desperately in love; and he would think her cold, and cruel, and false. Bah! what right had he to believe this sort of thing was to last for ever?—*il s'en tirerait comme il pourrait!*

In the middle of the Vorazof's reflections and resolutions, the polite *commis* of Herr Dornberg came back, *désolé* to inform Madame that Herr Dornberg would be absent on particular business till to-morrow. If Madame's affair was urgent, would she confide it to him (the polite *commis*)? No? As Madame pleased, then. Herr Dornberg would be at Madame's orders in the morning. And the polite *commis* bowed his visitor out of the *bureau*.

If that engaging *commis* spoke the truth, Herr Dornberg must have had a double; for, while the Vorazof was sitting in his gloomy little den, two men, one the double in question, were watching her through the dirty little square of glass let into the door which divided the bureau proper from an inner chamber. Moreover, it was in precisely the Teutonic-French accent of the Herr himself that his double replied to his companion's questions. The latter, a thin, close-shaven, vulpine-faced individual, had regarded Madame with great interest; as one, indeed, desirous of photographing her face perfectly on his memory. 'Ainsi—c'est bien elle?' he asked. Whereto the Herr's double—or the Herr himself—had replied, 'Mais, zertaînement Monsieur Glitstein, z'éd elle!' 'Bon!' responded Monsieur Glitstein, 'Et vous avez toujours l'écrin?' 'Barplen!' 'Alors, vous le porterez chez moi ce soir, à dix heures. Nous la tenons enfin, et j'en aurai besoin. Au revoir, Monsieur Dornberg!'

And then Monsieur Glitstein went away to his little affairs, humming a *chanson à boire* quite pleasantly. He didn't seem to have much to do either. He lounged through the sunny Linden-Strasse, inspecting the shop-windows, like the veriest

badaud—glanced carelessly at the *Fremden-Liste* posted up here and there, and, finally, lit a cigar and strolled into the gardens of the Kurhaus, smoking tranquilly. A very close watcher, though, of Monsieur Glitstein, might have fancied that between that amiable personage and one or two other loungers he met on his way, there existed a slight affinity. An affinity, not indeed openly manifested on either side, but betrayed, to the close observer aforesaid at least, by an interchange of almost imperceptible signs. And so he might have perhaps concluded that, mere idler as he seemed, Monsieur Glitstein had his work to do in Lindenbad, and was doing it.

The Vorazof had her work to do, too. After that unsuccessful visit to Herr Dornberg, Madame la Comtesse did not know what to think of her position. Was she betrayed or not? Utterly unscrupulous herself, she trusted no one; and it seemed possible—nay, probable. How else to account for her liege lord's looks and words just now, unless by the supposition that something—a whisper, the least hint would be sufficient—had reached his ears about the little game she was playing, not alone on the green cloth, but with Vladimir Laginski besides? If this were so, the more imperative the necessity to lull his suspicions by the production of the necklace. Yes, she must have it by to-morrow at latest. But how? She had barely half the sum necessary to redeem it in her possession; and she dared not at present further diminish the contents of her jewel-case. Bah! she thought, why should she? The cards might befriend her, and make all right yet.

And so, you see, it comes to pass that we find her at the *Trente-et-Quarante* table to-night. The cards have befriended her pretty well, until that last coup. She lost heavily there, and she is not playing this round. She is wrong. Had she doubled her stake on the *noire*, as she felt inclined to do in her recklessness, she would have regained all she has lost to-day, for

for a brief space the red gets the worst of it. Still she holds back, with a timidity utterly foreign to her usual style of play. So much more than mere notes or rouleaux depends on the turn of a card now, that she feels nervous. Monsieur Glitstein standing opposite, behind the croupier, watches her curiously. He has found time, it seems, to put in appearance at the tables, and wins or loses a napoleon or two occasionally like any other bystander. But his eyes never wander far from the Vorazof, and he smiles softly to himself as he sees her suddenly push a little ball of notes on to *noire*. The presiding croupier unrolls the ball and verifies the amount.

'Il y en a quatorze mille, Madame,' whispers the official across the table—'Le maximum des enjeux est de douze mille—veuillez donc retirer deux mille francs.'

She shakes her head impatiently. She wishes to end this suspense at once, and has staked her all. If she loses, what are two thousand francs? If she wins, she has won enough for her purpose.

'Mais non!' she answers, half angrily, 'je joue le tout on rien!'

There is a second's consultation of the placid visage of the Watcher of the Game enthroned beside the Vorazof: and then,

'C'est bien Madame! pronounces the croupier, 'Comme vous voudrez. Tout va à la masse!'

The cards are dealt, Madame's eyes following them keenly, and Monsieur Glitstein's too. He has a crumpled piece of paper in his hand, and twists it carelessly between his fingers. His vulpine physiognomy becomes more vulpine than ever as he cranes over the table to watch the fate of the Vorazof's last stake. Will the quick fingers never finish the deal? A dozen cards have been told off for the *noire* ere the low monotonous voice—so clear and telling in that eager hush—proclaims '*Trente-trois!*' The Vorazof breathes more freely. She is almost sure to win now—it is almost certain there will be a higher total for the red. Monsieur Glitstein seems more interested

than ever. He smiled a strange smile when he heard that *Trente-trois* pronounced. '*Trente-trois!*' he muttered, twisting that scrap of paper still in his uneasy fingers—'*C'est drôle, tout de même—ça!*' The cards are being played for the red now. The backers of that hitherto lucky colour begin to think the run in their favour is ended, and watch the result with forebodings of evil. They haven't long to wait. The croupier turns the first card. '*Dix!*' and then, in quick succession, '*Vingt—vingt-neuf-et trois! Trente-deux, Messieurs! Rouge gagne et couleur!*' The Varazof has lost her fourteen thousand francs by just one point!

Monsieur Glitstein, watching her as, a trifle paler, but otherwise with her face in perfect command, the Comtesse rises from the table—Monsieur Glitstein is so far forgetful of decency as actually to chuckle. '*Allons!*' he mutters, apparently to the piece of twisted paper he is rubbing his hairless upper lip gently with. '*Allons!—elle est bien à moi maintenant! ou peut frapper les trois coups et commencer la petite comédie!*' As the Varazof made her way on to the terrace, Monsieur Glitstein summoned one of the watchful lackeys of the Etablissement to his side by a motion of the head.

'*Remettez cela à Madame,*' he said, giving him a crumpled and twisted scrap of paper, and indicating the Vorazof with a glance—'*Elle vient de le laisser tomber!*'

Monsieur Glitstein, the light falling full on his fox's face, stood and saw his request duly executed. Saw the Vorazof open the paper mechanically, and glance carelessly at its contents. Then saw her turn deadly pale and look uneasily about her, till her eyes, as he had meant they should do, rested upon him. Whereupon Monsieur Glitstein saluted Madame politely, and turning on his heel, disappeared in the crowd. The Comtesse leaned, half-fainting, against the frame of the open window. Yet there was nothing very appalling, in the wording at all events, of the communication which eccentric Monsieur Glitstein

had chosen this way of making to her. Look over her shoulder and read for yourself. Merely this.

'*Au numéro trente-trois. On vous attendra ce soir à onze heures à l'extrémité de l'Allée Verte, dans le Pavillon de Flore.*

'*Le Numéro Treize.*'

II.

'LE PAVILLON DE FLORE.'

The Allée Verte at Lindenbad, as I daresay you know, runs parallel with the Terrace of the Kurhaus on the other side of the gardens. It is the usual evening promenade of sojourners in '*The Happy Valley,*' who congregate round the Pavillon de Flore, at its upper end, while the Director's band discourses eloquent music from a neighbouring kiosk. The Pavillon de Flore is a rose-trellised structure, amply provided with luxurious rustic chairs and lounges, whereon recline, during the noon-tide heat, after their second visit to the popular Weissenbrunnen, or in the cool of the summer evening, after duly swallowing their last tumbler of chalybeate, the invalids or hypochondriacs who come to Lindenbad to '*make their cure.*' It is the prettiest out-door resort in the whole Bad—this bijou Pavillon. The roses climb and cluster round its walls, and hide the frame-work of its three windows, and drop their odorous leaves at every breeze upon the mosaic of its polished floor. It is the hobby of the head gardener of the Etablissement, and is cared for accordingly. And some of us, who have passed golden hours, I wot, with Amaryllis, in its grateful half-light, on summer nights gone by, when, safe for us, it was deserted, feel a debt of gratitude to that worthy man for his labour and his care.

It is nearly eleven by the clock, on the evening when this story opens. The Allée Verte has been utterly deserted this last hour. Across the gardens you see the lights in the Salle de Jeux, and upon the Terrace, where the smokers are lingering over their coffee-cups or dominoes—that feeble pastime is

indulged in even here—in the midst of the *gros jeu*—by its votaries as unintermittingly as in the boulevard cafés at home—you hear the faint sound of voices—perhaps catch the dying fall of one of Strauss' waltzes in the ball-room; but, by the Pavillon de Flore, where you and I are standing just now, and through the whole length of the broad Allée, all is quiet. Over the blue hills behind us the moon is rising swiftly into the cloudless sky. Her sheen lights up the valley, and the river, and the dark woods on the other side—lights up the smooth, trim-gravelled walk in front of us, through the close-woven branches that meet above, with patches of golden light—cleaves a bright path for itself as it pours through the open window of the Pavillon, across the tessellated floor to the rose-grown doorway. All is still and tranquil. And yet neither of us have heard the footsteps of the man who emerges from the shadow close beside us, and who, after one quick glance round him, glides as quickly into the shelter of the Pavillon. We, who have eaten of fern-seed, you know, and are invisible, need not fear to disturb him. Let us enter, too, and stand beside him. Our acquaintance of just now—Monsieur Glitstein. Cool, calm, and fox-like; in a long, dark cloak and a slouch hat, though, as if he were dressed for the 'First Conspirator' in a transpontine melodrama. He drops noiselessly into a chair, well in the shadow, and finishes the cigar he is smoking, tranquilly. He appears, you see, to have no doubt whatever that the Vorazof will keep the appointment he has fixed for her—fixed, certainly, as one having authority to command Madame la Comtesse's attendance. And he has authority, indeed, over her—authority she dare not question, still less defy. He is her master; and the moment she had read what was scrawled upon that twisted scrap of paper which we have seen the Kurhaus valet give her in the Salle de Jeux, she knew it perfectly well.

'Certainly she will come,' soliloquizes Monsieur Glitstein between

the puffs of his cigar, and in the French tongue, which, in spite of his German appellation, seems his natural, or favourite, vehicle of speech. 'Certainly, she will come. She knows better, diablesse as she is, than to disobey one of *us*! And then to arrange our little affair. She has him—pieds et poings liés—that little comtesse—car elle est comtesse!'—he observed, in a sneering parenthesis. 'He would not take himself out of harm's way, even if he got the alarm, without seeing his chère amie once more—poor devil! And he *shall* see her once more, at the ball to-morrow night. The coup must be made then. And the papers? Ah! sacrédié!—are they hard to come by—those infernal papers! Not a trace in his despatch box, in his baggage, in his room—no, not after triple search! And their information, là-bas, they say, is positive. He has that in his possession which will send him and a dozen more of ces farceurs-là to Siberia for life—lists, documents, letters. Ou diable les a-t-il fourrés? Has them about him, perhaps? Bon! But twice already have my fellows, light-fingered as they are, failed to find them. And to arrest my man without the papers, and so leave myself without a clue to find them, would spoil the whole affair. Besides, my instructions are plain. They, là-bas, say to me, "You will arrest the suspect Laginski, when, at the same time, you can lay your hands on certain papers now in his possession—and only then." Bon! But how to know, for certain, that they are in his possession? that is, how to know if he carries them about him, as he must do? Aha! I have my little plan. My fellows were too clumsy. Besides, it is impossible to search a man, without his knowledge, as thoroughly as one could a room or a despatch-box! Yes! for a man, impossible! But, for a woman, the woman one loves to distraction, and would never dream of suspecting? C'est plus facile—ça! And that woman—I have found her! Better still, she is one of *us*! Le Numéro Trente-Trois will obey implicitly the orders of le Numéro

Treize—she must! Though it would be droll if she even hesitated when she sees these!’ And Monsieur Glitstein opens a shagreen case he takes from under his cloak, and, stretching his hand forth into the moonlight, pleases his eye with the flash and glimmer of a superb opal necklace.

‘A heavy price to pay!’ he murmurs, closing the case with a covetous sigh. But they, *là-bas*, know best, I suppose. The coup *must* not fail, and, above all, there must be no disturbance. She might risk a little for him, perhaps, if she were free; but, while I hold *these*, and *ce cher* Vorazof looks threatening and suspicious, she will not dare. No. She is mine; and, through her, I reach him!’

A step as light as his own outside the Pavillon, but not so light as to deceive his practised ear—the *frôlement* of a woman’s dress—a ‘shadow cloaked from head to foot’ crossing the bright pathway of the moonlight—and the Vorazof enters on the scene. Monsieur Glitstein throws away the fag-end of his cigar and rises to receive her. The pallor which overspread her face when she read his billet-doux, just now, rests on it still, save where, on either cheek, burns a crimson spot, sure sign, to those who know the Comtesse best, that she is waxing ‘dangerous.’ Her breath comes in quick, short gasps, as though the speed at which she had come had distressed her. The large blue eyes, *naïfs* and infantine no longer now, seem to have contracted, and sparkle with a strange and sombre fire. Over her dinner-dress—she has been dining at the Russian Ambassador’s, and was singing a ringing chansonette to an applauding circle of admirers twenty minutes ago—she has flung a long, loose domino, and, underneath it, her hands are clasped tightly on her bosom. She falls into the chair Monsieur Glitstein politely hands her, and the silence is broken only by her hurried breathing—like that of some hunted animal.

Till Monsieur Glitstein remarks, with his unpleasant smile, ‘C’est bien, Madame! On n’est plus

exact!’ And just then, indeed, the horloge of the Kurhaus struck eleven.

‘When you are sufficiently recovered,’ pursued Monsieur Glitstein, still in his favourite French, ‘we will, if you please, proceed to business.’

She broke in here. ‘Who are you? What do you want? Why have you brought me here?’

‘Because,’ he replied, still smiling evilly, as though her fury was something he thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed, ‘because I, Numéro Treize, have need of you, Numéro Trente-Trois. That is the answer to all these questions. I have need of you. I summon you. And you have come. Again, Madame, it is very well!’

She ground her little teeth in dumb rage, and pressed her hands tighter on her bosom. He went on.

‘You do not question my authority, your presence here proves that. So much the better. Time is short for what we have to do. And, pardon me if I seem to threaten, disobedience would have been attended with unpleasant results to yourself!’

She rose suddenly and faced him in the moonlight. The dangerous gleam in her eyes struck Monsieur Glitstein forcibly; but he laughed his cold, low laugh when she said—

‘Misérable! Tu oses me parler de la sorte?’

‘Parbleu!’ he answered. ‘I, Stanislas Glitstein, sous-chef in the Secret Bureau, to you, Comtesse Irma de Vorazof—employée, shall I say?—of the same? Yes, I do dare. Why not?’

She fell back into her chair, cowed, as though he had struck her. He went on in a sharp, changed tone.

‘Enough of folly like this. You are here to listen and obey. You will listen, and, when you have listened, if you are wise, you will obey. In the first place, they are not satisfied with you, *là-bas*. Your reports have been irregular, unsatisfactory of late, and, what is worse, incorrect. The chief has already half decided on suppressing your salary as a secret agent, and appointing another in your room. You have, however, a chance of reinstating

yourself in his good opinion. Let me recommend you to avail yourself of that chance. But you must do so at once, and thoroughly. You understand?"

"Go on!" she said, in a voice none who had heard her speak half an hour before would have recognized, so hoarse and harsh had it become.

And Monsieur Glitstein, still keeping his eye upon her as she cowered in her seat before him, went on.

"It is necessary, then, that you should know that there is now in Lindenbad a person who has seriously compromised himself with the authorities, *là-bas*. This person, forgetful of all he owes to the clemency of the Imperial Government, has been ungrateful and imprudent enough to organize a rash and hopeless plot against it. This plot has been discovered; its leader has become, for the second time, amenable to the laws he has daringly outraged. The proofs of his own guilt, and of the complicity of certain of his ill-advised compatriots in the conspiracy, are, it is known, at this moment in his possession. Hitherto all attempts to discover them have failed. It is supposed therefore that he carries them constantly about his person; and, if so, they are contained in a case or bag formed of small steel links which he would probably wear suspended by a chain round his neck.

"May I hope I have succeeded in awakening Madame's interest in my story?" Monsieur Glitstein broke off his narrative here to inquire, in his soft pateline voice, once more.

"Go on!" she said, again, in those strangely hoarse tones still.

"Madame is anxious to hear the dénouement, then?" Monsieur Glitstein suggested, with his unpleasant grin. "It is only natural. I hasten to continue. Once assured that what I have mentioned is the case, namely, that this steel case or bag is worn by the individual in question, it becomes my duty to arrest that individual. But hitherto I have, I confess, been unable so to assure myself without a too great risk of awakening any man's suspicions, and so ruining the coup. The arrest of the leader, without

obtaining the proofs of the guilty complicity of his subordinates, would be futile. More—it would, in the present state of things at Warsaw, be highly inexpedient, and even dangerous."

She had started, slightly, when he spoke of Warsaw, but his lynx-eyes had marked it.

"Madame divines now," he went on, "if she has not done so before, who the leader of this conspiracy is? If she does not, there is no reason why I should conceal his name. It is Vladimir Laginski."

"Vladimir!" she muttered under her breath. "And you mean that I —"

"Madame does me the honour to comprehend à demi-mot, I see!" he sneered. "She doubtless guesses correctly why I have need of her invaluable assistance in this matter. I have said that it is impossible for me, without risking an ignominious failure, to assure myself that the all-important documents are where I suspect them to be. Madame doubtless foresees that I am going to ask *her* to give me that assurance."

She laughed a short, harsh laugh.

"I?" she said; "and how can I —?"

"That I will explain to Madame."

"And if I refuse?" she said, after a moment's pause, rising, and, for the second time in their interview, confronting him with baleful eyes. Monsieur Glitstein, ever calm and watchful, noticed how, under her domino, her right hand was hidden in her breast; noticed the murderous look, that had been growing deeper and deeper under each taunt he had flung at her, on her face, as she stood before him in the moonlight, and paused a second, in his turn, before he answered—

"Madame will not refuse! I require nothing I cannot enforce."

"Ah! nous verrons!"

"It will be as I say. I have authority—the highest—for what I do. Recollect, you are one of us; and I, Numéro Treize, can command the services of any subordinate. Madame la Comtesse de Vorazof may find that disagreeable; but Le Numéro Trente-Trois in the register of the Secret Bureau will obey me, if

she is wise. *Voyons!*' he went on. 'Enough of melodrama. Let us speak reason. What I require is simply this. There is a masked ball at Madame de Rohan's to-morrow night. You will be present at this ball, if only to show scandal-mongers there is no truth in that story about a certain opal necklace.'

'Dornberg!' she muttered, involuntarily.

'Perfectly right!' said Monsieur Glitstein. 'It was he who was my informant. But, *entre confrères cela se peut!* Dornberg is one of us, too.'

She felt the net closing round her tighter at every word this man spoke. Monsieur Glitstein went on.

'Permit me to trace you a little programme of what will happen at Madame de Rohan's. Monsieur de Laginski will naturally ask Madame la Comtesse for a valse. Madame la Comtesse will accord Monsieur de Laginski the fifth valse upon her ball-card, which, I may remark, for fear lest Madame should forget, will be a new valse of Strauss' called the "*Liebeskranz*"—a charming title, is it not? The valse ended, Madame will take M. de Laginski's *left* arm, and permit him to lead her in the direction of the open window nearest the doorway looking on to the gardens. But, as she passes the doorway, madame will not fail to notice a masked personage who will wear a crimson cross on the left sleeve of his domino. To this individual Madame will say, in such a tone as to be unheard by M. de Laginski of course, the words "*Trente-Trois*;" and the man in the domino so addressed will answer "*Treize*." Five minutes later Madame, then on the terrace with her late partner, will feel slightly indisposed, and despatch M. de Laginski to look for her carriage. And that will be all. On her return home Madame will find the opal necklace on her dressing-table, and, if she chooses, and her indisposition fortunately happens to pass off, can reappear without her domino at Madame de Rohan's, and with the superb gift of Monsieur le Comte about her neck.'

'And you think I will do this?'

she hissed fiercely at him, in her rage and shame. 'Betray him!'

'Who spoke of "betray?" Madame will remember it was not I. But, since the word is spoken, I think you will. Useless!' he said, quickly, watching the motion of her hand that was hidden in her bosom.

'Useless! Do you think I trusted you so far as not to take my little precautions? They know yonder where I am and with whom I am. You would do well to take your hand off that murderous little toy—you would gain nothing by using it here. I might be provoked at last; and it would be a pity to break that dainty wrist of yours!' And, as Monsieur Glitstein snarled his last remark, he showed that he grasped under his cloak a short, pliant truncheon, loaded with a deadly weight of lead at its extremity.

'You understand, I see,' he added, as baffled and beaten the Vorazof fell back into her seat.

'Let me place your position before you,' he continued. 'If I am not mistaken, M. le Comte has already hinted to you that it would be well if you wore the necklace you left in Dornberg's hands to-morrow night. You best know what the consequences will be if you fail, as, without my aid, you will fail to do so. I was witness to your unfortunate loss just now at the tables; but if you had won that coup, you would have been little the better. Dornberg would have been unable to restore you the necklace to-morrow, for this reason, that it has passed from his possession to mine.' And, as he spoke, Monsieur Glitstein drew forth the shagreen case we have seen in his hands once before to-night.

The Vorazof recognized it at once. And then she realized perfectly how utterly she was in her companion's power.

'You see I was right when I told you I commanded nothing I could not enforce. Yes, I think you do. To resume. A whisper—it is nothing more at present—has reached M. le Comte's ears touching the friendship which exists—I should speak more correctly, perhaps, if I said which *has* existed—between

Madame la Comtesse and M. de Laginski.'

'Ah!' she broke in here, 'I owe you that, too, then?'

'The supposition is too flattering for me to deny it,' responded Monsieur Glitstein, with his ironical bow. 'Let that pass, however. I need not point out to Madame what would be the consequences to herself if that whisper ever grew loud enough to leave M. le Comte in no doubt as to the truth of the report, especially as the little arrangement I propose to Madame would relieve her from all anxiety on that head for ever. If she does me the honour to accept it, I can venture to assure her she has nothing to dread from calumny, or any indiscretion on the part of M. de Laginski for the future.'

The Vorazof, spite of her utter heartlessness and intense selfishness, shuddered. She knew what he meant only too well. Vladimir once on his way to Siberia, she had, indeed, nothing to dread from him, or on his account. She was weary of a caprice that threatened to compromise her irretrievably, and she was as unscrupulous as the worst of her sex alone can be. But she did shudder a little at this way of ridding herself of all unpleasant consequences, notwithstanding. Yet what was she to do? She was wholly in this man's power; she knew, only too well, how terrible was the secret power he had to back him in anything he might do, and that he would hesitate at nothing to gain his end. She would have murdered him just now, in the mad fury his taunts and her sense of helplessness—aristocrate as she was, in the hands of this low-born spy (it was that which galled her sorest)—had lashed her to, but his coolness had beaten her. And now, when he had left her in no doubt as to what she might expect if she refused, she felt resistance would be madness—she must obey. But Monsieur Glitstein had one argument more.

'Apart from all this,' he said, 'I have ventured to hint already to Madame the displeasure she has incurred from our chief. I have authority to inform Madame that,

should this coup fail by any fault or negligence of hers, she must expect no indulgence from the Secret Bureau. And it would need only one word from me to cause the entrée of every salon in Europe to be barred against Madame as though she were plague-stricken. *Le Numéro Trente-Trois* cannot fail to guess what that one word would be.'

If a look could slay, Monsieur Glitstein would have fallen dead at her feet, then and there.

As it was, he stood watching her closely and grinning sardonically, till he heard her answer.

This terrible interview had proved almost too much for that poor little Comtesse; and after that deadly look she had shot at him, she had sunk back pale and trembling, but conquered. So it was nearly a minute before her white lips could utter her reply—a question that told the listener all he wished to know.

'Que faut-il faire?'

Monsieur Glitstein, smiling triumphantly as he said the game was won, responded—

'All that is necessary is, that Madame should follow out exactly the details of the little programme I had the honour of sketching for her just now. If M. de Laginski have that which we require about him, I have reason to think Madame will discover it when she takes his left arm—if not before. In which case Madame will remember to give the *mot-d'ordre* to the individual with the crimson cross on the left sleeve of his domino, whom she will pass near the doorway.'

'And if——?'

'I understand. If M. de Laginski have not what we are in quest of in his possession, the papers will either have been destroyed, or will be actually in our hands. Whichever happens, Madame will receive due notice. Should she not receive such notice, she will know how to act. If all goes well, Madame may depend on finding her opal necklace on her dressing-table by this time to-morrow night—*foi de Glitstein!*'

And, with another bow, Monsieur Glitstein gathered his cloak about him, and prepared to depart. His work was done here, but there re-

mained other work for him to do that night, it seemed. The Vorazof shrank, shivering, from him as he passed her. At the doorway he turned, his crafty face looking more evil than ever in the yellow moon-light.

'Remember,' he said, pointing his crooked forefinger menacingly at her, 'remember, we are partners now. The game is our own—we must win it. But if you fail me, and we lose it, remember that before this time to-morrow night you yourself will be lost too! Au revoir, Madame la Comtesse.'

CHAPTER III.

THE 'LIEBESKRANZ' VALSE.

The *salle de danse* at the Comtesse de Rohan's is crowded, for this is the great ball of the Lindenbad season, and everybody worth the asking is there to-night.

It is not quite twenty-four hours since Monsieur Glitstein left the Vorazof in the 'Pavillon de Flore,' in other words, the *horloge* of the Kurhaus has struck eleven some twenty minutes since. The clang and crash of a wild galop has just come to an end, and the maskers are roaming to and fro, and up and down, in search of some promised presence, or bent on one of the thousand intrigues a *bal masqué* is so prolific in. Until midnight it is *de rigueur* that masks and dominoes shall hide face and figure and toilette jealously; but at the last stroke of twelve the latter are to be discarded with one accord, and the 'transformation scene' will blaze forth in all its brilliance. The prelude to Strauss's new valse, played for the first time at Lindenbad to-night, is just beginning now. A man in a scarlet and black domino forces his way, with scant ceremony, through the press about the doorway, running rather hard against one individual in particular, who wears a crimson cross on his left sleeve, and whose face is closely masked, like every one's else.

'Vous êtes pressé à ce qu'il paraît, Monsieur le Comte!' remarks this personage, in a voice you and I have

heard before—the pateline voice of the ubiquitous Monsieur Glitstein, indeed.

The other, addressed as 'Monsieur le Comte,' starts slightly, but passes on with a muttered excuse.

The man with the crimson cross takes up his position near the entrance, and stands there with folded arms to watch the scene, and the movements of two actors in it in whom he takes especial interest.

'C'est pour ce soir?' mutters a voice at his elbow.

'C'est pour ce soir?' responds Crimson Cross in the same tone, but without turning his head. 'La valse finie, il viendra chercher la voiture de qui tu sais. C'est alors que le coup devra se faire. Va-t'en!'

'Bon!' responds the other, and disappears among the crowd of people pressing into the *salle de danse*.

The scarlet and black domino meanwhile has reached one of the long windows which open on the terrace gardens. A woman in a pale blue domino, with a knot of white riband fastened at the shoulder, has been waiting there some ten minutes. Her eyes shoot eager glances through her 'loup,' the lace fall of which perfectly concealed the lower part of her face.

'Will he never come?' she thinks half aloud.

At last her eye lights on the man whose appearance she is so anxiously looking for. The scarlet and black domino halts beside her, and, without a word, unfastens the white knot from her shoulder, and thrusts it into his breast. As his shrouding domino opens, you see he wears the Polish national costume beneath it.

The pale blue domino takes his arm without hesitation, and the pair move away.

The orchestra have finished the prelude, and the 'Liebeskranz' valse has begun.

Scarlet and Black, with mignonne Pale Blue in his arms, is swinging round the valse-circle in another moment. His head is bent down till his black moustache almost touches his partner's ear, and he is speaking fast and low. He holds her tighter in his arms as he speaks,

in a passionate clasp that makes her shiver, as though he hurt her.

'Will it never come, then, Irma?' he is saying. 'This time you have promised me so often should come. When is this misery to end?—misery for both of us. Ah, finissons-en, for pity's sake!'

If he had only known how very near the end was!

'Hush!' she answers, and the voice is the Vorazof's voice. 'Hush, Vladimir! It is impossible. Have I not told you he suspects—more than suspects—already? His arm is long and heavy. To do what you ask me—to fly with you now—would be madness.'

'And you refuse?'

'Yes, I refuse; you must be mad to suppose I should consent! Besides, it is too late,' she mutters so low to herself that he never hears her.

'Mad?' His arm closes round her so suddenly and fiercely that he does hurt her this time. Something hard, like a coat of mail, he wears under his domino hurts her. But it is not the pain that makes her shiver even in his hard grasp, and try and shrink from him. 'Mad? I think I am. Ah! you have never loved me, Irma, as I have loved you, or you would never tell me so. What do you mean? That all is over between us?'

'All soon must be over between us!'

'And you think I will submit to treatment like this? I, who love you more than life—who risk something worse than death to be here to-night and hold you in my arms once more! Ah! no! Mine is no boy's love you can fling aside when you weary of it! You are mine by right of that love, and mine you shall be!'

Decidedly this man was getting dangerous. Who could tell to what length his headstrong passions might not drive him, if—?

The Vorazof smiled a strange smile to herself, and her delicate fair face grew hard and 'set' under her mask, as she thought what two words from her could do: how they could free her from this man who would infallibly end by compro-

ming her—could silence those terrible suspicions of her husband's—could break Monsieur Glitstein's yoke from off her neck—could set all right again. And it was so easy! Only two words! Yet she *did* shrink a little from pronouncing them, notwithstanding. It was hard to have to sell—yes, to sell—the man who loved her—whom, not long ago, she had fancied she loved,—it *was* hard to have to sell him into bondage and exile. Yet—what was she to do?—a weak, helpless woman, against these strong, brutal men—what chance had she? And then, Vladimir was likely to prove so horribly dangerous if she refused that mad prayer of his to fly with him. And, if she yielded, what had she to expect? Suppose she cared sufficiently about him, and they could have got clear away—what then? No. In every way the game was not worth the candle—Vladimir's game, that is. And Monsieur Glitstein's? If there was nothing more, there was an opal necklace to be won there. And to be won so easily!—two words, and it was hers—two words, and she got rid of all her entanglements and was free once more! 'I, who risk something worse than death to be here to-night,' he had said. He knew his danger, then—knew they were on his track? He would never suspect *her*. And Glitstein had proved correct in his crafty surmise. There it was, over his heart, that fatal letter-case. The steel links had almost bruised her shoulder when he held her so close, just now.

Floating in his arms round the valse-circle, his voice in passionate entreaty, bitter reproach, fierce menace, desperate love and longing for her, speaking ever in her ear—she thought some such thoughts as I have set down here—listening to the devil who was tempting her so cunningly, and answering—weary of his pleading and stung by his reproaches—Vladimir Laginski in cold short words that drove him mad. And, in his madness he spoke, at last, words that she would never have forgiven, even had she loved him still. And while that

last fierce, threatening whisper of his was yet in her ears, the 'Liebeskranz' valse came to an end.

'You are faint—ill?' he asked, as she clung almost convulsively to his arm—his left arm—when they stopped. 'Oh, forgive me, Irma! I hardly knew what I was saying—forgive me!'

'It is nothing,' she said, hoarsely. 'This room is stifling—take me on to the terrace.'

And they moved towards the window nearest the doorway, where the man with the crimson cross upon his sleeve was still standing, a simple, idle spectator. They passed so close to him that when the Vorazof dropped her fan it fell almost at his feet—so close that, when, bowing, he restored it, he could see her white lips, through the fall of black lace, fashion the words—'Trente-Trois.' Before Vladimir and the Vorazof had gained the terrace the man with the crimson cross had disappeared.

As they passed from the crush, and babel, and heat within, out into the calm cool night, the Vorazof seemed to drink in the fresh air as one half-suffocated. Repenting him bitterly of his hasty words, Laginski hung over her, as she sank down on the nearest seat, and, his reproaches all turned against himself now, prayed for pardon with passionate vehemence.

'Hush!' she said at last, faintly. 'Will you never learn discretion? It is done—and you are sorry. N'en parlons plus. You will, indeed, speak such words as you have spoken to me to-night, never again, I know. Never again; and that is enough. Now, will you look for my carriage—I can bear no more of this.'

'Going?' he said. 'I am punished justly—but severely. See, Irma, I am patient now. I take my chastisement without a murmur. Tell me once more I am forgiven?'

'You need fresh assurance then? Do you still doubt?'

'Doubt *you*?' Vladimir murmured. 'No, I cannot.'

She shivered, as though a chill had suddenly struck her.

'Am I to go for the carriage?' he asked.

She bowed her head in answer.

'So be it. I obey. But to-morrow, Irma—?'

'Yes, yes!' she said, feverishly. 'To-morrow.'

'And you will stay here till I come back?'

'I shall stay here.'

He raised her hand, that lay passively in his for a moment, and that felt so icy cold, to his lips. And then he went out from her presence, a doomed man. The crowd of maskers was swarming into the *salle de danse* once more. The orchestra had commenced another valse, and the broad terrace was deserted, except that the Vorazof sat still where Vladimir had left her.

The horloge of the Kurhaus chimed the three-quarters after eleven. At midnight, when the shrouding dominoes were to be discarded, she had promised her husband the world of Lindenbad should envy her the superb opal necklace he had given her, once more—that he himself should see her in her full ball-toilette. Had her treachery been in vain? Would Glitstein keep his word as she had kept hers? A step behind her on the terrace made her turn her head. She started up suddenly with a half-smothered cry. Close behind her stood a man in a scarlet-and-black domino, looking at her with glittering eyes through the daintily embroidered mask Vladimir de Laginski had worn that night.

'Vladimir!' she muttered.

The man in scarlet-and-black laughed—a low unpleasant laugh.

'Madame se trompe!' said Monsieur Glitstein's voice—'Les morts ne reviennent jamais! Monsieur de Laginski will trouble neither you nor us any more. The coup is made at last. But politeness would not suffer me to allow Madame to want an escort to her carriage, which awaits her below. As M. de Laginski is prevented from having the honour of offering Madame his arm, it is I who must supply his place. And, to avoid any remark, I have taken the liberty of borrowing for a few moments a costume which M. de Laginski has no further

use for. Madame, as I promised, will find the opal necklace on her dressing-table. Let me entreat her to gladden the eyes of M. de Vorazof as soon as possible with the sight of a parure that so infinitely

becomes her. It is, I assure Madame, the very last request which, for the present, Numéro Treize has to make of Numéro Trente-Trois.'

Ruy.

MARLING HALL.—A TALE.

CHAPTER VIII.

ALL this time I had heard regularly from my father. He reported very favourably of Mr. Frank Thornton's health, and seemed himself to be deriving much benefit and pleasure from the thorough change. He sent me graphic descriptions of the various places they visited, and of the pictures and different objects of interest they went to see in each. I in return wrote to him pretty frequently, but had judged it better to say nothing either about the alarm I had twice experienced, or the account Catty had given me of the beginning of Flora's illness. Such matters were best left, I thought, till we met.

A few days after Cousin James's return there came an unusual document to Marling Hall in the shape of an invitation for Mr. James and the Misses Ainslee to a Christmas Eve party at Greyburn Park, a place about ten miles distant, the residence of Sir John Orfield. The note came to Marian while we were in the library, just before breakfast; and on her brother asking what it was, she read it out in a tone that said as plainly as possible, I thought, 'How very absurd to think of asking us.' But Catty did not seem to see it. She flushed up with eagerness.

'You'll let us go, Marian? It's so long since we have been to anything of the kind.'

'My dear child, what are you thinking of? You know we never go out. It is quite out of the question.'

Catty looked down abashed, but Cousin James, seeing her disappointment, said, kindly,

'I don't quite see that it is impossible, Marian: what are your objections?'

'We will speak of it another time, James, please,' said she. 'Breakfast is ready; will you come to the table?'

The subject was dropped for the time, but in the course of the morning, when only my two elder cousins and myself were in the library, James began again.

'You have not written your answer yet, Marian?'

'No; but of course I shall decline. I wonder you don't see, James, how impossible it is.'

'I really don't see why: it would do Catty good. I can't bear to see her so unlike herself. I know she is fretting about Walter; they were so merry together last Christmas. I shouldn't wonder if Flo, too, were better for a little amusement.'

'Flora! My dear James, I shall think you are out of your mind. When the least excitement makes her ill!'

'Well, perhaps not Flora. You understand her best,' he said, rather sadly. 'But why should you not take Catty and Cousin Hilda?'

'And leave Flora alone? Not for the world!'

'Then you stay with her, and let the girls go with me. I will take good care of them.'

'They must have a chaperon if they go; I can't let Catty go without me,' said Marian, in a distressed tone. 'James, I wish you would not press it.'

'If I do press it, it is for poor little Catty's sake. We mustn't forget, Marian, because we don't care for such things ourselves, how ne-

cessary some diversion is for young people.'

'I thought,' said Marian, in a trembling voice, 'that, under all the circumstances, you would have been the last to wish your sisters to mix in all sorts of gaieties, where you don't know whom they may meet.'

'All sorts of gaieties! My dear Marian, I am only speaking of a Christmas party at Sir John Orfield's. And as for objectionable acquaintances, I assure you you need be under no anxiety on that score. Lady Orfield is sure to be particular enough on her own daughters' account.'

Marian said something in a low tone which I did not hear, to which James responded, gravely,

'You forget; that was at home.'

It is always very unpleasant to make a third party at anything like a warm discussion between near relatives; and the more inclined they seem to be to forget your presence, the more unpleasant does it become. I began heartily to wish myself away; so I now came forward, though it was a great effort to do so, and said,

'I hope you won't think at all of my going, Cousin Marian; but if my staying with Flora would release you to go with Catty, I shall be so glad to do all I can for her.'

'Thank you,' said Cousin James; 'it is very kind of you to propose it, though I wish you could have gone too. Now, Marian, what have you to say?'

I did not wait to hear the answer, but escaped to my room. When I came down to dinner, the radiant look in Catty's face, and the ill-at-ease one in Marian's, told me pretty plainly that Cousin James had won the day, and a whisper from Catty confirmed the fact. All the afternoon she was in high spirits, her liveliness quite returned, and only regretting that I was not to be of the party, which I could hardly convince her was no disappointment to me.

Discussions about dress occupied a good part of the two days that intervened before Christmas Eve, and Marian's maid had plenty of employment. Catty watched the sky

with anxiety, for Marian had accepted the invitation subject to the weather, and I think half hoped to get off it yet. But the morning of the 24th dawned bright and clear. I noticed that Cousin James, after consulting the barometer, looked rather long at the horizon, but I at least saw nothing there to betoken a change. The party was to assemble early, and, as the roads were bad, the carriage was ordered round for half-past four. Marian said she should not stay late, and hoped to be back soon after midnight. Before they left she gave me very particular directions about Flora. She was not to stay up later than half-past ten, and as she might be restless, expecting them back, and disturbed nights were so bad for her, I was to give her, the last thing after she was in bed, a sleeping-draught that she would leave ready mixed.

I put the finishing touches to Catty's attire—she looked so pretty in her white dress, with the scarlet camellia in her hair—wrapped her up in a thick shawl, and then watched them drive off from the front door. It was such a beautiful evening that I was tempted to linger on the step. The sky was still cloudless, with the exception of a low grey bank that just showed like a chain of distant hills against the pale yellow light that the set sun had left behind it in the west. I watched till the yellow was almost absorbed by the dark blue and the first stars twinkled into sight, and then, warned by a sudden feeling of chilliness of the increasing coldness of the temperature, I retreated into the house, and returned to the warm glow of the library, where the curtains were already drawn and the lamps lighted.

I had seldom been alone with Flora before, never for any length of time, and I was agreeably surprised to find what a pleasant companion she could be, though so very quiet. She was getting used to me now, and regarded me less as a stranger; besides which, in the present instance, I think she considered that Marian had delegated her authority to me, and there was something very winning in her gentle

submission to my merest suggestion, when, after all, I was only a visitor in the house, and scarcely two years older than herself. She seemed pleased when I began to speak to her about Tennyson's poems, the book I oftenest saw in her hand, and when, after tea, I asked which was her favourite, she turned over the pages at once, as though she had no doubt in the matter. On my begging her to read it to me, after a little nervous hesitation, she began, in a low voice trembling with feeling, the lines 'Break, break, break,' &c. The feeling was too much for her, however. At the end of the third verse she quite broke down, and gave way to a fit of such passionate crying that I heartily repented having asked her. For some time I tried in vain to soothe her; at last, with a sudden impulse it seemed, she threw her arms round me, and laying her head on my shoulder, became gradually calmer. She did not alter her position till the butler came in with coals to do up the fire.

'It 'll be a wild night for the ladies, I'm thinking, ma'am,' he said; and then, for the first time, I became aware of the change in the weather. The wind was rising; I could hear it whistling through the trees; it seemed blowing up for a gale. Presently there was a sound like snow driven violently against the windows. Mentally I concurred with what the man had said, but I did not like to take much notice for fear of alarming Flora, who had hardly seemed to take it in. The same reason deterred me from taking down the shutter-bar and looking out, as I could have wished to do.

'It is getting very stormy,' she remarked at last, as the tumult outside grew wilder and wilder.

'It may be all quiet again before they leave Greyburn Park,' I replied. 'At any rate, they will be quite snug in the carriage, we may hope.'

The evening wore away very slowly. At last the clock struck half-past ten. Flora rose mechanically; she was so used to punctuality.

'Can I do anything for you?' I asked.

'Oh, no, thank you. I shall ring for Ewins; she will do all I want. Good-night.'

'I shall see you again,' I said, remembering the sleeping-draught. 'I shall look in on you in about half an hour to see that you are all comfortable.'

As soon as Flora was gone I went out into the passage and drew back the bolts of the little door leading out on the terrace; but such a gust of wind and driving snow met me as I opened it, that I closed it again at once, though not without some difficulty. What a night to be out in!

I returned to the library and sat there till I thought Flora would be ready for her draught, and then I made my way up to Marian's room. On the dressing-table, where she had promised to leave the mixture ready prepared, was the medicine-glass and china spoon, and beside them a bottle containing a brownish liquid marked '*poison*,' but nothing was poured out. Evidently, in her hurry at the last, she had forgotten it. There were no directions on the bottle as to the amount of the narcotic—for such it undoubtedly was—to be taken at a dose, and even had I known the number of drops I should hardly have ventured to mix them in such a case. I tapped at the door communicating with Flora's room, and, as I entered, the maid went out by the other that led into the passage.

'Marian wished you to have a sleeping-draught,' I said to Flora, 'but she seems to have forgotten to mix it. Did she say anything about it to you?'

'No; but don't trouble about it, Cousin Hilda. I don't always have it, and I feel as if I should sleep well to-night, I am so tired. Indeed it doesn't matter,' as she saw me looking round the room, in the vain hope that, after all, the dose might have been placed ready for her. Whether it mattered or not, there was no remedy for it now, but I resolved not to go down again till she was asleep, and therefore took up my position in Marian's room, leaving the door of communication open. Flora begged that I would not sit up on her account, but I

assured her with truth that I had no wish to go to bed, and was most comfortable by the fire.

More comfortable in body than in mind, in fact. I was uneasy about the three cousins who were out, it might be, in this fearful storm, scarcely less so about the one whose blue, wakeful eyes met mine each time I looked into the room. Fearing at last that my frequent appearance at the door might tend to make her fidgetty, and less likely to sleep, I resolved to allow a much longer interval to elapse before my next visit.

At about a quarter to twelve the storm began to lay itself, and by the time the clock struck, all was pretty quiet again outside.

'Christmas Day!' I said to myself, as the vibration of the last stroke died away, and in my heart I wished my father the best of Christmas blessings. After that I fell into a reverie, and had wandered in thought far from Marling, when I was recalled to a sense of the present by the welcome sound of the regular breathing of a sleeper that reached me from the next room. Stealing in on tiptoe, I saw by the dim light of the lamp that was always burned in her room by night that Flora was sleeping calmly.

When I went down I found all the doors and windows fastened for the night, and everything was quiet. There was one window, the shutters of which were never closed, I suppose because none of the servants ventured there after dusk, and that was the window on the white staircase. Thither I now turned my steps, being anxious to see what sort of a night it was. It required some little self-command to go up, but I wished to conquer my fears, and nothing helped so much to do this as my real anxiety for my cousins. The storm had passed away, and there was a splendid full moon—Marian had reckoned on that—but the ground and the lower roof and the upper side of the branches of the trees were dazzling white with snow; and that the fall had been heavy was evidenced by its depth against the window, the lowest pane of which it almost blocked up. 'It is worth

coming to see,' I thought; and as I stood looking out I almost wondered at myself for ever having felt nervous about the white staircase.

The window opened on the roof of the long hall or gallery before mentioned, which stood out from that side of the house. 'How easy it would be to get out on the roof this way,' I said to myself, and at the same instant there recurred to my memory a somewhat confused recollection of having myself once performed that feat in old days, in company with some of my younger cousins, Walter being of course the leader. I remembered how while we were wandering about the roof he slipped in and shut us out, causing such an outcry that my aunt came hurrying upstairs and released us, not without a scolding. As I stood there, trying to recall the circumstances, I mechanically pressed in the side spring and tried to throw up the sash, but it would not move. Then, for the first time, I noticed that it was screwed fast, so that it was not possible to open it. That was not all. Two strong iron bars crossed the window outside, so that it would not be easy to get out even if it were opened. What was that for? additional security, I supposed. Access to this window would be so easy from the outside; but, nevertheless, the discovery caused a chilly feeling to creep over me.

At this instant the clock struck one. If, as seemed likely, my cousins had waited till the storm abated before they started, they would not be home for some time yet, and no doubt one of the servants was sitting up for them. I could scarcely be of any good, and Marian would, I thought, be better pleased that I should not wait up till they returned. Before going to my room, however, I lingered for one more glance at the moonlit scene. The gaunt, bare chestnut trees, the blue shadows on the snow, gave it a weird appearance that fascinated me.

I was on the point of turning away when I was arrested by a sound that thrilled through every nerve. It was a light footstep coming along the passage that com-

municated, as I mentioned before, with the old part of the house. My uncle might be up still, for aught I knew to the contrary; but it was not his step, and the idea that for a moment crossed my mind that Marian's maid might be coming, like myself, to look out on the weather, I dismissed in an instant as utterly out of the question: at the same time the conviction came upon me that it was the same step that I had twice heard in the night. All this passed through my mind in far less time than it has taken to write. My first impulse was to fly to my room, but my feet seemed charmed to the spot; I lacked even the power to turn round, and stood, as before, with my face to the window.

The steps came on, on to the stone stairs—they were almost behind me. Then, with a sudden effort—I hardly know to this day how I could do it, no mere human courage that I possessed could, I am sure, have given me the necessary strength—I turned round, resolved to face this midnight visitor, whether of earth or not.

A figure in white was coming up the stairs. But how astonished was I to recognise—rendered yet more ghastly by the moonlight into which she was passing—the pale face and violet eyes of my cousin Flora! *She* here, and at this time of night! I could hardly believe my senses.

'Flora, dear!' I exclaimed, all dread of the supernatural gone in an instant, 'is anything the matter? Do you want me?'

But there was no look of recognition in the blue eyes; there was not the slightest change of expression in her face as she passed me, and went on straight up the stairs to the white room.

A strange shiver passed through me as I watched her; for somnambulism, except as a matter of hearsay, was to me such an utterly new thing, and I doubt whether any amount of familiarity would enable me to view with indifference or equanimity this most incomprehensible and—I must use the word—uncanny phase of human existence. And yet with the dread there was mingled some degree of relief; for I had the

key now to much that had surprised and perplexed me during my stay at Marling Hall. Marian's constant anxiety about her sister, her extreme reluctance to leave her for a single night, Dr. Travers's visits, and the frequent sleeping-draughts—above all, that mysterious footstep on the stairs—all were now accounted for. If there remained anything behind not yet cleared up, it did not at least occur to me then.

Crushing down my apprehensions as well as I could, I waited quietly for my cousin's return. My greatest fear now was waking her. She did not stay long. As she came down I could see that tears were streaming down her cheeks. Poor child! I suppose in her sleep she was acting over again the visits she had once so constantly paid to the room of her dearly-loved sister, and weeping to find it empty. No doubt that grief was the chief subject of her waking thoughts, and weighed on her mind even in dreams. She passed me again without notice; and, after waiting a few minutes to give her time to regain her room, I followed noiselessly the way she had gone.

I found her lying in bed, her white dressing-gown hanging on the door—everything as when I had left her, except the tear on her cheek. A piteous 'Sister May!' wrung my heart as I bent over her.

After what had occurred I could not leave her, and I seated myself by the window, watching the declining moonlight, till all grew dark again. The faintest indications of dawn were just beginning to appear in the south-east, when there was a loud ring at the front bell, and presently I heard some one coming quickly up the stairs. I knew it was my cousin Marian, and I went out to meet her. She started on seeing me.

'Anything amiss?' she asked, hurriedly. 'Flora——'

'Is quite well,' I replied; 'but she was restless, and I did not like to leave her.'

Marian gave me a keen, questioning glance.

'She had the draught?' she said, in a faltering voice.

'No; you forgot to mix it, I think. I could not find it. But really I don't think she is any the worse for it. She is sleeping very quietly now.'

'It is the first time I ever left her since her illness,' said Marian, 'and I never shall again. We could not start till past midnight, and then we lost our way in the snow, and were detained. You go to bed now, Hilda—you must be very tired.' And she kissed me with more heartiness than she had ever done before. 'You must not go to Catty now,' she went on; 'you ought both to go to sleep as soon as possible; and,' she added, emphatically, 'when you do see her, you had better say nothing to her about Flora. There is no need for her to be alarmed.'

I fancied she guessed how things had been.

CHAPTER IX.

When we met next morning at a mid-day breakfast I was glad to see that Flora was looking, for her, quite bright and cheerful. My elder cousins were grave and preoccupied; but Catty talked enough for all. She was full of the events of the past evening, which she seemed thoroughly to have enjoyed, not even excepting the storm and their subsequent bewilderment in the snow. 'It would have been so stupid,' she said, 'to have gone away before every one else. And as for losing our way, we were as comfortable as could be in the carriage; and it only made the drive a little longer.'

For myself, my thoughts were rather in confusion. I could hardly realize that this was Christmas Day. There was only a morning service at Newton-Magna, and that, of course, we had lost. Outside, everything looked Christmas-like enough; but within, I missed the evergreen decorations that always marked the season at home. My dear father had not forgotten me. A large foreign-looking package was lying on my plate.

As soon as breakfast was over Catty challenged me to a sally out into the snow.

'Not just now, my dear,' said Ma-

rian, gravely. 'Hilda, I should be glad to speak to you in the wainscot room.'

This was a small room looking out on the flagged terrace, and used, now that Cousin James was at home, as his sitting-room. He had left the breakfast-table some time, and we found him here seated at his books. He rose and offered me a chair, and Marian sat down on the sofa, and then there was an awkward silence. Marian looked at her brother, who was walking up and down the room, as though expecting him to say something. At last he began,

'You took kind care of our little Flo last night, I understand. I am afraid, from what Marian tells me, that you found her very restless.'

'She must have been dreaming, I think,' I said. 'She got up in her sleep.'

'And went out of the room?'

'Yes. I had left her, thinking she was sound asleep, when, as I was standing by the staircase window, she passed me, and went up the stairs. I thought that she was awake at first.'

'She went on to the white room, I suppose?' He spoke as though it were no new thing.

'Yes; and came out crying bitterly. But then she went back to bed, and was quiet all the rest of the night.'

'You must have been very much alarmed. We should not have dreamt of going out, and leaving you to such a charge, if we had had any idea of how things would turn out.'

'I was not very much frightened,' I said, 'except the first minute or two. Afterwards I was more sorry for her than anything. I never thought that any one could seem so unhappy while asleep.'

'If it were only in sleep, there would be more hope of curing her,' he said, gravely; 'but it shows too plainly the subject of her waking thoughts.'

There was another silence. Marian had not spoken all this time, and I did not know what to say.

'Does it often happen?' I ventured to ask at last.

'What, the walking in her sleep?'

Not often now, I believe; but Marian can answer that question better than I can.' And he turned to his sister.

'Dr. Travers's prescription has been very useful,' she answered, in what sounded to me a forced and unnatural tone; 'I give her a draught whenever I see symptoms of excitement, and am then sure of a quiet night for her.'

'I wish it were not necessary,' said the brother again. 'Such frequent narcotics must injure the constitution.'

Marian gave no answer but a deep sigh; and then, though I felt that I was treading on tender ground, I could not refrain from asking,

'If she could be brought to talk about poor Cousin May sometimes, would it not be better for her than nursing her grief in secret?'

There was no answer to my question. Cousin James was standing by the fireplace at the moment, with his back to me. Marian had her hand before her face. Instinctively, I felt that I had made a blunder, and regretted having spoken. At last, Cousin James said, in a somewhat peculiar tone—

'You have heard how Flo's illness began?'

'On the night that her favourite sister died she fancied she saw the white lady on the staircase, did she not? I suppose she has never got over the shock to her nerves, or was it the grief at her death?'

'Both I should think,' and as he turned round his brows were knit as in anxious thought. 'Marian,' he said, after a pause of some length, 'so far I think Hilda is right. If she were able to speak of her it might be the best thing.'

Marian gave him a quick, startled look. 'If she could, why do you speak of impossibilities, James?'

'I don't know,' said he: 'this is miserable work—miserable for you and every one, as well as for her, poor child. I never saw any one look so like a brokenhearted creature. Can it be right to let her pine to death when there may be a chance of saving her?'

'What more can be done for her

that I have not done?' moaned Cousin Marian. 'Have I not given up everything for her, devoted myself day and night to her comfort; in every way tried to supply the place of one who proved herself so little worthy of the love she still wastes on her?'

'My dear,' said her brother, coming up to her, and taking her hand, tenderly, 'I know, no one better, how much you have given up for her sake. How you put aside all thoughts of the home that was offered you, and what was more, the honest love of a good man's heart, because you did not think it right to leave her, besides the daily sacrifice of your life to her welfare; but, for all that, we can't hide the truth, which is that, do your best, it is not possible for you to supply May's place in her heart.'

'I know,' said Marian, bitterly. 'I gave up all hope of winning her love long ago.'

'Hilda,' said Cousin James, suddenly turning to me, 'does Flo ever speak to you of those old days?'

'Never,' I replied; 'but I have noticed her shrink and turn pale at the slightest allusion to the white staircase, as though the old alarm was still fresh in her mind.'

'And she never mentions May?'

'No, never; but I am sure she was thinking of her last night.' And I related what had taken place in the library, with regard to her reading the poem.

'She must dwell on it very much,' he said. 'Marian, I should like to see Dr. Travers when next he calls.'

'I can tell you all he would say,' she answered, quickly; '"Turn her thoughts, turn her thoughts," he would tell you; but that's more easily said than done.'

'If she were to see a little more of the world it would give her a fresh interest,' he suggested.

'You don't understand her at all, James: the least excitement upsets her—nothing does her so much harm.'

'When does Dr. Travers come?'

'Any day this week,' she said, wearily; 'but I assure you, you can do no good. Every measure has been discussed.'

'Does Dr. Travers know everything?'

Marian's eyes fell. 'How can you ask?'

'Then he does not?'

'You know as well as I do that it was not possible.'

'I don't know but what we ought to make it possible. I have sometimes thought lately that we may have brought this punishment on ourselves.'

Marian's face flushed, and she spoke sharply.

'You would not make out that she was right and we wrong?'

'No, no: she was no doubt to blame, poor child; but perhaps we hardly estimated the provocation; and, at any rate, the idea of mending matters by double-dealing was, I fear, a sad mistake.'

'Mistake or not, it is too late to alter now.'

'Very difficult, I grant you, Marian; but not too late in one respect. We can at least make known the truth.'

'And own ourselves to have been acting a lie all these years. Oh James, think of our father! it would break his heart to have it get about.'

'I don't know that. Look at him now, and think of what he used to be in old times. I am inclined to think that the keeping up the deception has had more hand in breaking him down than the first shock. He would have got over that in time, I believe.'

I think Marian must latterly have forgotten that I was in the room, for just now, catching my eye, she started and glanced meaningly from me to her brother.

'No matter, Marian,' said he; 'Hilda knows more about it than most do already, and I meant that she should learn the whole truth. This is a hateful state of things!' and he stamped his foot vehemently on the ground.

Marian said not a word, but she buried her face in the sofa-cushions, and her whole frame was convulsed with emotion.

'Don't you feel it to be so?' he went on, more gently. 'Think of what this house used to be in our mother's time: fuller of life and

merriment than any in the neighbourhood, and then see what a cloud is over it now! I never saw a place so dismal and melancholy. Marian, it is enough to drive those girls mad. When I think of it the wonder to me is not that Catty's spirits are lower than they used to be, but that they are not broken altogether. What marvel is it that the uneducated think the house haunted? For my own part, I can't get rid of the memory of our poor May's gentle face. It seems to haunt me everywhere.'

'What is the use of bringing up painful subjects?' said Marian, looking up at last, with white lips. 'What is done cannot be undone.'

'If it only could!' said Cousin James, 'but, Marian, if we can see only one step clear in the right direction it ought to be taken.'

'You would speak to Dr. Travers?'

'To my father in the first instance. It was our persuasion, joined to his mother's, that first induced him to consent to the deception, and I believe that if I could get him to look at it in the light that I am beginning to do it would be a greater relief to him than you can imagine.'

I had listened in painful suspense to the conversation. A dim idea of the truth, aided by the recollection of that unaccountable omission in the Bible register, and of Marian's manner at the time, was beginning to dawn upon me; but it was very vague yet, and I longed for more certain knowledge. My longing was not yet to be satisfied. The announcement of dinner broke in on the conversation, and I was astonished to see how immediately both my cousins, outwardly at least, recovered their usual composure. I think they felt it important, for the sake of others, that things should for the present go on in their ordinary course.

Nevertheless, all the afternoon Marian was somewhat restless and strange. Cousin James had followed my uncle out of the room, and I fancied that they were now together. Catty and I had a short ramble in the grounds, but the snow was melting, and it was so wet and

sloppy underfoot that we soon came in again. I fancy that Catty found me an unusually dull companion, I found it so difficult to give my mind to everyday matters.

At five o'clock—she waited so long, I think, hoping her brother would come—Marian had her maid in, and we had a short Christmas Day service. I was very glad, for I had missed it so, and I think it very much helped to compose her, she looked so softened after it, and the tears were glistening in her eyes. Somehow I could not help hoping that this Christmas might usher in more peace and gladness to this saddened house than had visited it for many a long day.

Tea time came, but my uncle and cousin did not make their appearance. They had rung for it in the study, the servant said, and I saw neither of them again that evening.

Next day Dr. Travers came. There was the same appearance of its being a chance call—the same invitation to join us at our early dinner, as readily accepted. But when the meal was over, it was Cousin James who found something to consult him about in the garden, and carried him off. Marian lingered a little while in the library, but soon slipped out, I suspected, to join them. Nearly an hour had passed when the servant brought in a message that Miss Ainslee would be glad to speak to me in the wainscot room, and there I found the three assembled. Marian's eyes were red and swollen, but she seemed pretty calm now: Dr. Travers looked somewhat excited and bewildered, as though he scarcely understood the present aspect of affairs. He questioned me closely as to Flora's behaviour on the evening and night of the 24th; but when this examination was over there was a pause, and he looked doubtfully at me, as though not knowing how far I was in my cousins' confidence.

'You need have no hesitation in speaking before Miss Murrey,' said Cousin James. 'Sit down, Hilda;' for I had half risen to leave the room. 'Now, Dr. Travers, you have heard all. Will you give us your free and unbiased opinion?'

'You must excuse me, Mr. Ainslee;' and the doctor drew his hand across his brow; 'but I have not had time to think it over: it has been such a surprise to me. Will you allow me to ask a few questions?'

'By all means. I am anxious you should be as clear about it as possible, and shall then value your advice.'

'You are very good to say so. I assure you you may command my services in any way in which I can best be of use. But now, am I right in understanding that this apparition of the white lady which first unsettled Miss Flora's nerves was no mere trick of the imagination, as I was always led to believe, but something that really and actually did take place?'

'Quite right, doctor,' replied my cousin. 'My sister May got out by the staircase window, and there is no doubt that it was she Flora saw coming down the stairs, though, in the moonlight, and wrapped up as she must have been, she did not recognize her. Besides, she believed her to have left the house.'

'That is a part I do not understand,' said the doctor. 'I was always told she had gone away with old Mrs. Ainslee the preceding evening.'

'So she was to have done. Everything was arranged for it. But she made some excuse; her things were not ready, or something; and at the last moment she obtained leave to remain behind, my father undertaking to accompany her himself to my grandmother's house the next day. The old lady was very averse to this change of plans, which she pronounced absurd; but my father having once promised was not to be persuaded to withdraw his consent. Mrs. Ainslee, however, took the bulk of May's luggage with her, and there was, we found, a general impression, even among our own household, that she had actually gone with her, as at first intended. On that account no surprise was expressed when her room was found empty next morning. "So Miss May did go with Mrs. Ainslee, after all," I overheard one of the maids say to another, and

you may be sure I did not care to undeceive her.'

'But, Mr. Ainslee, the open window! I can't think how no one came to suspect it.'

'You forget into what confusion the house had been thrown by poor Flo's illness. It was some time before even we discovered that May was gone. One old man-servant found out the truth, but he had been a great many years in our service, and was devotedly faithful. He was of great use in following and finding her out in the first instance, and afterwards in hushing matters up. The idea of such a *mésalliance* was, I believe, every bit as painful to him as it was to the family.'

'And your sister, Mr. Ainslee? He succeeded in tracing her, you say?'

'Yes, Mr. Bemor had taken her to his mother's house, at Manchester. But Capper, the servant I spoke of, was not in time to prevent their marriage. The day after they left the country. That was the last we ever heard of them.'

'And then the report of her death was spread?'

'Yes, that was chiefly old Mrs. Ainslee's doing. We resolved, at all events, to keep things quiet till we heard from her, and she came down herself as soon as she received my father's message. She was dreadfully put out at the thought of one of the Ainslees of Marling Hall marrying a poor artist; and when she heard that the fact was as yet quite a secret—my sister being generally supposed to be at her house—and knowing that she was out of the country, the plan occurred to her of giving out that she had died on the journey of sudden illness. She was practically dead to us, she said; and thus she excused the lie. My sister and I caught at the idea only too readily, and together we persuaded my father to consent. May had always been a great pet of his, and he was at first inclined to relent, I think, and seek her out; but his mother's influence prevailed in the end. My grandmother's maid, who had been her only travelling companion, of course knew the truth, but she was like a shadow of her-

self, and there was no fear of her betraying it.'

'Mrs. Ainslee did not live long after, I think I understood?' said the doctor.

'No; she died the next year. I don't think she ever got over the blow to her pride. She had set her heart on May making a grand match, and, indeed, it was chiefly on that account that she wished to take her off home with her. She thought her father far too lenient, and that she should be able to manage her much better. I believe it was the dread of her severity that drove May to the step of leaving home at last.'

'And you have heard nothing of your sister since?'

'Nothing whatever. I can hardly think that she is still living. Now, Dr. Travers, that you know all, in your opinion would anything be gained by making the truth known?'

'You are not certain that your sister is not yet alive. Surely that would be worth finding out.'

'As to that, I have very little hope myself. I was rather thinking of Flora.'

'I see, I see!' said the doctor, rubbing his hands. 'If she could be convinced that it was no supernatural appearance, but her sister that she saw on the stairs that night, it would be a great point gained. But we must be careful—it is a very ticklish matter. Leave it in my hands, if you please, Mr. Ainslee. If we manage it rightly, I don't know but what we may bring her round yet.'

'Doctor Travers, I know we may perfectly trust you,' said Marian, anxiously; 'but you will be very cautious how you break it to her. You know we dare not even name the white staircase before her, she is so exceedingly nervous and sensitive. Even some slight resemblance in my cousin here to her poor sister put her quite in a tremor, I could see, the first time she saw her.'

The doctor waved his hand deprecatingly.

'Never fear for me, Miss Ainslee; I will be caution itself. I cannot tell you how pleased I am at anything that seems to give a chance of

restoring the poor young lady. You know,' and he lowered his voice, 'my real fear all along has been for the brain.'

Dr. Travers presently took his leave. He promised to come again in a day or two, and to watch for a good opportunity of broaching the subject to Flora, though he warned us that it might be some time before he would be able to do this.

Left alone with my cousins, I received information on some points that had been dark to me in the preceding conversation. The main facts were these.

In the year following Esther's death a young artist of the name of Bemor came to stay in the neighbourhood for the sake of the beautiful scenery, which he was continually sketching. He had letters of introduction to my uncle, who, being much pleased with his talent, showed him every kindness in his power and encouraged him to visit frequently at the Hall. From my cousins' account it seemed that Mr. Bemor was well educated and highly respected, but he had neither fortune nor family; and when old Mrs. Ainslee came down on a visit, she was horrified to find that my uncle had allowed him to become intimate with her grandchildren, and a constant visitor at the house. She treated the young man with cutting contempt, and May, for whom she fancied he had a liking, with great harshness and unkindness, making her life, even at home, so miserable that she resolved at last, rather than go back with her, to yield to Mr. Bemor's entreaties, and become his wife without consulting the wishes of her friends. Mrs. Ainslee's severity quite defeated its own object, Cousin James remarked, for May was so gentle and yielding by nature that a very little kindness would have won her heart, and made her tractable and obedient. I could not make out exactly how Marian herself had acted in the affair, but, from the expressions of regret that escaped her from time to time, I fancy she felt that a little more tenderness and sympathy on her part might have warded off the catastrophe.

CHAPTER X.

Dr. Travers came frequently in the course of the next few days. I almost smiled to myself at the excellent reasons he found for coming, so as not to excite Flo's nervousness. At one time it was to consult Cousin James about a horse he thought of purchasing, at another to ask Marian's opinion as to the best colour for a drawing-room carpet. But, whatever the pretext of his visits, he always managed first to engage Flora's interest, and then skilfully to draw her into the conversation. As yet he carefully avoided the subject we all had most at heart. He was gaining her confidence and feeling his way.

There had been a great change apparent in my uncle ever since Christmas Day. There was a light in his eye, a ring in his voice, above all, a restless excitability in his manner, that differed much from his usual imperturbable demeanour. He came in and out among us much more frequently, and took an interest in the goings on of the family that he had not done before. Catty noticed and wondered, incessantly; Flora made no remark, but I could see that her eye would brighten whenever he came into the room now, and that she responded more readily to any demonstration of affection from him than from any one else. Love for poor, lost May seemed an unconscious bond between them.

Cousin James and his father were often closeted for long together, and numbers of letters went and came. Both were indefatigable in their endeavours to find out the Bemors, but without success. Old Mrs. Bemor had died at Manchester, that much they discovered; but they could find no clue to the whereabouts of her son, though cousin James spent two days there, making fruitless inquiries. Nor did the advertisements inserted in the 'Times' by my uncle's solicitors bring about any result. I longed to be of use, but could think of no way. Catty, unsuspecting as she was by nature, began to fancy that there was something in the wind, and showed an

inquisitiveness of which I should not have thought her capable; so that I had to be much on my guard to keep my cousins' counsel.

The name of *Bemor* had, somewhat strangely, struck me from the first as familiar, though when or how I could have heard it before I could not in the least recollect. It was in vain that I routed all the stores of my memory, and, concluding at last that I must have come across it in some book, I gave up the effort to remember as a hopeless task.

I was in the act of sealing my weekly despatch to my father one day, when suddenly it flashed upon me that the name I had been trying to think of occurred in an old letter of his; and, looking carefully through the bundle, I came upon this sentence—

'We spent last evening at the house of Signor P——, to whom we had letters of introduction. He has a choice collection of pictures; among others two portraits by an English artist of the name of Bemor, which we particularly admired. Thornton will have it that one of them is like you, but I can't say I see the resemblance, and should be sorry to see my darling Hilda looking so sad, though I must own the face is a very sweet one.'

I flew down to the library, where I found all my cousins gathered. It was just post time; so, feeling that if inquiries were to be made, no time was to be lost, I took the letter to Marian and said,

'I thought you would be interested in my father's letter from Florence.' She looked up from her writing, surprised.

'Thank you, my dear: some time I should be glad, but this letter has to go by the post.'

I suppose I looked a little vexed, for Cousin James laid down his newspaper and said,

'May I see the letter? My stay at Florence, three years ago, has given me a great interest in the place.'

I gave it him gladly, and watched his face as he read. He started slightly as he turned over the page; then said, as quietly as possible,

'Your father speaks of the Florentine mosaics: some of them are very beautiful. I have some good specimens in the wainscot-room, which I brought back with me. Will you come and see them?'

I took the hint and followed him out of the room.

'It is a very strange coincidence,' said he, hurriedly, as soon as we were out of hearing of the rest. 'It may be nothing, but it is worth following out. There is not only the name, but the fancied family resemblance. Do you think your father would be able to obtain any further information for us?'

'I am sure he would if he could, but they left Florence three weeks ago, unfortunately. However, he could write to Signor P——, no doubt. I will add a line to my letter.'

I had only time for a short postscript.

'Could you obtain for me any information as to the artist named Bemor you mentioned in your first letter from Florence, in connection with some paintings at Signor P——'s house? I cannot now enter into particulars, but have urgent reasons for wishing to know the following facts. Is he married, is his wife living, and what was her maiden name, and where is he now?'

I half wished to have written more fully to my father next day, but on my asking my cousins' permission to do so, they decided that nothing more should be said on the subject until his answer arrived. Should what we heard be favourable to their hopes, Cousin James said, he might think it well to go out to Italy himself.

We anxiously looked out for a letter: it came in about a fortnight.

'My dearest Hilda,—When I came to the end of your letter I was forcibly reminded of the saying that the most important part of a lady's epistle is contained in the postscript. Yours, I confess, fairly puzzled me. Trusting, however, to your assertion of good reasons for your most incomprehensible questions, I was concocting a letter to Signor P—— when young Thornton came in, and

to him, hoping that he would aid me in my composition, I confided your commission. He showed a great deal of inquisitiveness on the subject, and it was a good while before I could convince him—it is a point on which I can hardly be mistaken—that you assuredly numbered no one of the name of Bemor among your acquaintances. He threw cold water on the idea of my writing, asserting that a personal interview would be so much more satisfactory.

‘In short, he persuaded me into consenting to stay in this place another week—we were to have gone on the following day—to enable him to go back to Florence and make inquiries. So it is him you have to thank for any information I am able to give you.

‘It seems that Signor P—— bought the pictures three years ago when this Mr. Bemor was residing in Florence. One of the portraits was of his wife, but Signor P—— did not know her maiden name. He fears that Mr. Bemor must have been in great straits, or that he would not have disposed of it. At the end of a year they left Florence, and Signor P—— has heard nothing more of them. Mr. Bemor seemed in very delicate health, he feared going into a decline.

‘This was all Thornton was able to learn respecting them. He bids me say, however, that he will not rest till he has found them out, though how he means to manage it I don’t quite know. At any rate, I shall be glad to hear more of your grounds for wishing these particulars to be ascertained, that I may better judge how far other considerations should give way to this.’

The rest of the letter was on indifferent matters.

Cousin James was not long in making up his mind. He resolved to go to Italy at once. He undertook to look up my father and make all necessary explanations, it was so much easier than writing.

Catty and Flora were so used to their brother’s long absences from home that they expressed no surprise when they heard of his projected journey abroad. After he

was gone we soon fell back into the old routine, except that we continued to see a good deal more of my uncle, and that Dr. Travers’s visits were very frequent.

Cousin James had been gone almost a week when one day, coming in from an afternoon stroll, Catty and I observed—no unusual sight—the doctor’s carriage driving away from the door. We found the library unoccupied, and a message was soon after brought in by Marian’s maid that Miss Flora was ill and Miss Ainslee unable to leave her. She begged we would not wait tea for her.

Flora was so often ill that Catty thought nothing of it, nor, apparently, did my uncle, who presently came in; but connecting it, as I could not help doing, with Dr. Travers’s visit, and the news he had undertaken to break to her sooner or later, I felt uneasy and very anxious to hear more. I must have appeared very abstracted to Catty, who, after sundry vain attempts to engage me in conversation, yawned and went off to bed, leaving me alone in the library. I lingered on, hoping that Marian would be coming down, till past eleven, and was preparing to go when my cousin came into the room, pale and tearful.

‘I thought it just possible that you might be sitting up,’ she said, seating herself wearily in an arm-chair; ‘I knew you would be anxious to hear about dear Flo.’

‘Has Dr. Travers told her anything yet?’

‘Yes. He told me yesterday that, though he felt it was a risk, he feared yet more the consequences of the morbid dread of the supernatural that was working in her brain, and he would try to bring forward the subject to-day. I cannot tell you how I dreaded the visit. It is at any rate over now.’

‘How did he manage? Did she bear it well?’

‘He had been asking a good many questions about her relations yesterday, by way, I suppose, of leading to it. To-day he went on getting nearer, and began to question her about her brothers and sisters. I saw her colour come and go, poor

child; I feared every moment that she would break down. At last he asked; "Which of the young ladies was it that married Mr. Bemor, the artist?"

"None of my sisters," Flora answered. "I have no married sister."

"Indeed, my dear young lady, I think you are mistaken," he answered. "I know they did not speak about it at the time because they did not much like the marriage, but it was true nevertheless."

Flora looked from one to the other of us, quite bewildered.

"Perhaps you do not recollect," he said, "it was about eight years ago." I almost wished the doctor would leave off; her hand, which I held in mine, was shaking so terribly.

"She was to have gone on a visit to her grandmother, Mrs. Ainslee, so I am told," he went on; "but she stayed behind one night in order that she might go to Manchester to be married to Mr. Bemor: and, as her friends might not have liked it if they had known, she went away in the night. If any one had been going up the white staircase then they would have met her coming down, dressed all in white. Miss Ainslee, you must have heard the story. Was not your sister's name May Isabel?"

Flora had been almost gasping for breath the last few moments. Now she gave a little scream, and would have fallen if I had not caught her. Her agitation alarmed me dreadfully. She was almost in convulsions.

"Was Dr. Travers frightened?" I asked, as my cousin paused.

"He was evidently very anxious at first. But he said it was only what might be expected, and that the question was how she would be when it was over. He had brought some soothing medicine with him, for he was prepared for something of the sort, and he bid me keep her as quiet as possible. He is coming again to-morrow."

"And how has she been all the evening? is she better now?"

"She was sleeping quietly when I came down. The crying fits seem to have exhausted themselves. I

must not stay any longer, Hilda. I have not been to my father yet, and I dare not leave Flo long."

CHAPTER XL

Flora did not come down at all next day. Dr. Travers found her very weak, but calm; and he spoke hopefully about her, for the brain was evidently lightened, he said, and that had been the chief cause for anxiety. Marian was quite taken up with attending to her, and deputed to me the task of undeceiving Catty as to the real fate of her sister May. It was long before I succeeded. Her frank, candid nature was slow in taking in the idea of the deception that had been practised, and when at last convinced of the truth of what I told her, she was wildly indignant with all who had aided in it. The only thing that at all appeased her anger against her brother was the knowledge of the energetic measures he was now taking to find out what was become of his sister. She had been so little used to see her father take any active part as head of the household, that she did not seem to regard him as in any way implicated in the affair.

It was a great relief to my mind that no concealment was any longer necessary. I had felt so miserably constrained with Catty of late, and now we could talk of everything freely. Even my uncle, in some measure, came out of his reserve. He did not, indeed, speak of May by name, but he made no attempt to conceal his anxiety for news from Italy; and was continually coming into the library, to know if any fresh account of Flora had come down from Marian, who, for fear of excitement, would allow no one but herself to go into her sister's room.

This state of things lasted for a day or two. Dr. Travers, who came daily, reported favourably of Flora; but we were not allowed to see her. The fourth morning brought a hurried note from Cousin James. It was more satisfactory than we had ventured to hope. Thanks to Mr. Frank Thornton's exertions, they had just succeeded in finding out

where Mrs. Bemor, said 'to be a widow, was now residing, and were on the point of starting for the place.

In the afternoon we were allowed to see Flora one by one. She was sitting up in an easy chair, looking pale and languid, but she welcomed me with a sweet smile. What struck me most of all in those few minutes was the change in her manner towards Marian. The expression in her eyes whenever she looked at her, the intonation of her voice when she spoke, told more than words could have done, that the elder sister's devotion was repaid at last; that her yearning for a return of love was filled up.

Later in the evening, when she had seen Flora settled for the night, Marian came down to us in the library. She had sent a message to say she would come, and my uncle, contrary to his usual custom, had remained down after tea, instead of retiring to his study. He took no part in the conversation, but though he walked up and down all the time, he evidently listened to every word with the deepest interest.

My chief anxiety was to know how far Flora had taken in the tidings Dr. Travers had wished to communicate to her, and to what extent she realized, or indeed was cognisant of the present state of things. In reply to my questions, Marian said that she had done both in a way she had not at all anticipated. After the violent weeping of the first day was over she had been quite astonished at the composure with which she could speak of her sister, and ask questions about her. 'In fact,' she continued, 'she knows how matters stand at present just as well as we do, and heard her brother's letter read this morning with no signs of emotion beyond a few quiet tears. No one can long more intensely than she does for news of poor May; but she is beautifully patient and resigned, and so entirely believes that James will do the best he can, however things turn out, though one might imagine she had cause enough for doubting us all.'

Her lip trembled as she spoke,

and I knew, though she did not say it, that Flora's gentle forgiving spirit, her entire absence of anything like reproach for the part they had acted, touched her more than anything else.

An interval of three days, during which Flora seemed to be slowly regaining her strength, passed before we again heard from Italy. The next letter, addressed to my uncle, came while we were at the breakfast-table, and he hurried away with it to his study. Catty did not venture to follow him, nor yet to go to Marian for information, and we passed a long and anxious hour in the library, unable to settle to anything and longing for news. It was but a scrap that Marian brought in after all; but much was contained in the few words.

'I have found out our poor May; so altered! I am anxious to get her to England as soon as possible, and we may arrive not long after this letter, so let Marian make ready for them, and prepare Flora.'

Catty's joy was exuberant, though she was disappointed at not hearing more particulars, and especially anxious to know who the 'them' consisted of. We saw but little of Marian; she had many orders to give and was afraid of staying long away from her sister, though she had, she said, borne the news very well.

We were allowed to see Flo in the evening, and found her quiet and collected in manner, but with a flush on her cheek and a brightness in her eye that told of excitement within.

The suspense did not last long. A telegraphic despatch received next morning announced the arrival of the travellers in England, and named the hour at which they hoped to be at Detford. Poor Catty was in a state of pitiable restlessness all day, and when once she had seen the carriage drive out of the gates, on its way to the station, all possibility of sitting still, even for a moment, was over for her. She wandered along the passages, up and down the hall, even out on to the doorstep, unheeding the chilliness of the air; till the distant sound of

returning wheels drove her back to the library in a state of nervous perturbation, most unusual to her.

Marian was upstairs with Flora all this time.

'You will ask James to bring her up here;' she had said to me; 'I dare not leave Flo.'

We heard the carriage drive up to the door; and the ring at the bell. I felt doubtful whether I ought not to go out and meet them, and deliver Marian's message, but Catty clung to me in such a manner as to render this hardly possible. The next few minutes seemed interminably long. I was beginning to think they must have gone straight upstairs when I heard the sound of voices approaching; and then the library door was opened, and Cousin James came in, leading a lady, dressed in deep mourning. Two little golden-haired children, a girl and a boy, had hold of her dress on the other side, and hung back shyly when they saw us.

I hardly know what was said or done next. I heard Catty give a little hysterical laugh, and I know that I started forward to give her time to recover herself. Then Cousin James said something; and I found myself kissing the lady, who, for anything I could recognize at that first glance, might have been a perfect stranger.

By this time Catty had controlled herself a little, and coming forward, gave her sister a very tearful embrace. She then turned to the little girl, whose dignified 'Who is oo?' provoked a laugh that helped to set us all rather more at our ease. Seeing Cousin James look anxiously round, I hastened to give him his sister's message.

Catty wished to keep the children down, but though the little boy was coaxed to stay by the sight of a picture-book the little girl was not to be persuaded.

'Ruth doesn't want pictures. Ruth will stay with mamma,' she protested.

'Ruth will stay down because mamma wishes it,' said her mother, gently, and the grave sweet voice commanded instant obedience. The little hand let go its clutch of the

gown and suffered itself to be led away by Catty.

While my cousin devoted herself to the entertainment of her nephew and niece, rapidly developing in the new relationship a love of children that had hitherto lain dormant in her nature, my thoughts flew upstairs, trying to imagine what the meeting must be between the two sisters after such a parting.

May came down to tea without her bonnet, and I could see her better; but it was difficult to trace any resemblance in the sad, care-worn face in the widow's cap, either to the likeness in the drawing-room or to my visionary remembrance of the twins.

Catty undertook to superintend the putting the children to bed, and had so completely gained their hearts that they went willingly with her, after a promise from their mother to look in on them after they were asleep. I knew that May must be longing to go back to her sister, and fearing lest any one should think it incumbent to stay with me till Catty returned, I seized the first opportunity of slipping off to my room.

I did not the least expect to see Cousin Marian again that night, and was as much surprised as I was pleased when she tapped at my door and asked for admittance. She only stayed a minute or two. She knew, she said, that I should be anxious to hear about Flora, and came to tell me that she was very well, and intensely happy. Then she kissed me tenderly and bade me good-night; and my cheek was left wet with her tears.

My stay at Marling Hall was fast drawing to a close. My father's three months abroad with Mr. Thornton had all but expired, and he wrote me word that he hoped to return and claim me in another ten days. That last week was so different from what the others had been,—it was as though an Evil Spirit had been driven from the house. My uncle, playing with his grandchildren, and responding to their merry prattle, was quite another man; and day by day he shut himself up less in his study and mixed

more with his family. Flora began to come down again for an hour or two every day, and though more delicate-looking than ever, the nervous affection had quite passed away, and with it the barrier that had to so great an extent shut her out from intercourse with others. Catty was enchanted with the children, and occupied herself with them, one way and another, almost all day long. Cousin James talked every day of returning to Oxford, but still he lingered on, unwilling, it seemed, to break up the so lately restored family circle. Only Walter was missing, Catty sometimes said, with a sigh; but she consoled herself with writing to him tremendously long letters, in spite of James's assertions of the extreme improbability of their ever reaching him.

May herself was very, very quiet. The loss of her husband was still fresh in her mind, and the struggle for a livelihood during his long illness, and subsequently, must have been very hard. Then, too, the coming home, after all, must have been so strange. And, though no one spoke of it, I think she could not but connect Flora's illness with her going away as she had done—she was so unspeakably loving to her. To her father also she was devotedly attentive—anticipating his smallest wish. Each seemed desirous to make up to the other for what had passed.

But the one whose conduct I most wondered at was Marian. She who had made Flora her chief object, her first consideration; whose life I had sometimes thought would not be complete without her—now quietly, unostentatiously drew back, and let May take her place. With no parade of giving up, no appearance of wounded feeling, she smiled to see the sisters together, and passed on to other duties. If it had not been for the stern, set look that came over her face sometimes, the tight clasp of her hands when they were not by, and she thought she was not noticed, I should hardly have guessed what the trial was. But, having seen that, when Cousin James remarked to me one day,

after observing her for some time—
'She may talk of past sacrifices, but the greatest is really going on now,' I understood what he meant.

It had been arranged between Cousin James and my father, when they parted in Italy, that the latter should, on his return to England, come to Marling Hall to fetch me, and remain for a day or two before taking me back to Haldane. I had no idea that the invitation extended any further till a day or two before he was expected. On Catty asking some question about her brother's return to Oxford, he replied, 'I shall stay and see Uncle Henry, at any rate; besides, did I not tell you that I asked young Mr. Thornton to come here with him and stay a day, if he could spare no more? He is going up for honours this Term, I understand, and I daresay we shall return to Oxford together.'

'Young Mr. Thornton! who on earth are you talking of, Jim?'

'Hilda can tell you—only she's so interested in the weather;' for I had turned to the window and stood with my back to them—'he is the young man with whom my uncle is travelling: a clever fellow, and very agreeable, too. He was most kind in helping me in my search, and I wished my father to make his acquaintance.'

'It is rather out of his way if he is going to Oxford at once,' suggested Catty.

'Yes. I was afraid at first it was no use proposing it for the present; but he seemed quite to catch at it. I suppose he was anxious to see me again.'

My father came: how glad I was to see him! and stayed three days. They passed quickly and pleasantly—and then, with many expressions on his part of gratitude for the kindness that had been shown me, and hopes of future meetings, we took leave of our relations and returned home.

My cousin and Mr. Frank Thornton went to Oxford the same day, and we travelled part of the way in company.

CHAPTER XII.

I have been writing of a Christmas three years ago. It is Christmas Eve to-night, and I am once more at Marling Hall. I have left a merry party in the drawing-room to whom I must soon return. Shall I describe it? It is merely a family gathering. One would not have thought once that there would ever have been much mirth in such an assemblage in the house again.

First, as to seniors: there are my father and my Uncle Ainslee: handsome, white-haired men both of them; neither of them talkative by nature, they yet enjoy each other's company, and watch with kindly interest all that goes on about them. Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, of Ash Court, are also there. This is their first visit to Marling Hall, but they seem already quite at home. Thoroughly well-educated and unpretending, they make friends wherever they go. Cousin James, who is, as usual, spending his Christmas at home, is pleasant and frank as ever—no change in him that I can see. But Marian is greatly altered. She alludes jestingly to her grey hairs, indeed, and says she is beginning to feel quite patriarchal; but to my thinking she is growing younger rather than older. At all events, if this is growing old there is nothing in it so much to be dreaded. Mrs. Thornton is delighted with her, and I don't wonder at it. She is such an excellent manager in household matters—such an admirable elder sister. Not only that: all this she was when I first knew her;—but her manner is so softened—so kind and gentle, that she wins universal love as well as respect.

May's sweet face has not got back its girlish brightness. There is a cloud there that will never, I think, quite pass away. But for all that I doubt whether there is any one in

the house who contributes more to the general comfort—whose very presence has such a soothing influence. Flo—still delicate and fragile—is her especial charge. All hope of her being ever really strong has been given up; but Dr. Travers says that, with care, and that she is sure to have, she may live many years, peacefully and happily. There is no cause to fear for the brain now, and she has never needed a sleeping-draught since May came home. The good old doctor is one of the party to-night.

The sailor, Walter, is also here. It is the first time I have seen him since we were children together. He is a bluff, hearty fellow; overflowing with fun, and full of affection for his home circle.

Last, not least, of the grown-up people, there is my dear husband, Frank. I may be excused for not describing him, beyond saying that neither in his success at college, nor since, has he at all come behind the expectation of his friends.

Catty's face is the only one we miss to-night, and we have been talking of her a great deal, dear child. She married and went to India last summer—just too soon to be my bridesmaid.

I must not forget the pets of the household, Herbert and Ruth, May's bright, well-trained children. They have been at such romps with their uncle Walter all the afternoon! The pattering of the little feet up and down the white staircase brought forcibly to my mind that midnight footstep three years ago. But the old dread is difficult to realize. I never hear any talk of the White Lady now; no part of the house is shunned by the servants as haunted. I doubt whether even the good landlady of the Radstone 'Stag' any longer shakes her head and looks mysterious when speaking of Marling Hall.

N. A. L.



OUR COMMISSIONAIRES.

IT cannot be said that the meed of admiration and laudation is ever denied to the gallant defenders of the country. Our historians in rounded periods, and our public speakers in glib speeches, on all occasions speak of the men of our army, not only as 'men and brothers,' but as special objects of concern, worthy of all the nation's solicitude, and the gratitude of every individual who is capable of a generous impulse. Such is the lip-service performed towards our idols; but, unfortunately, flagrant facts force upon us the conviction that no class of public servants has ever been so ill-requited as our soldiers, and a single sentence will suffice to demonstrate this proposition. The British soldier is necessarily one of the best specimens of his race, whom we enlist in our service, and whom—after getting all the work we can out of him, perhaps minus an arm or a leg, or hopelessly damaged in constitution—we turn adrift to fish for himself in the troubled waters of life. Such is the upshot of every Blue Book of the Army Medical Department ever issued, and certainly of the last, detailing the formidable diseases which render the service a perpetual battle with grim Death, which the soldier escapes only with the certainty of being invalided, when he may deem himself fortunate if furnished with a scanty, insufficient pension. The annual average number of men belonging to her Majesty's service losing limbs from accident only exceeds twenty-five; and if we add to them those soldiers and sailors whose health is so affected by service as to incapacitate them for ordinary labour, the above number would be increased tenfold.

This state of things has always existed, and in former times the result was most disastrous to the community. Discharged soldiers often became highwaymen, footpads, or ruffianly beggars, and at every recurrence of peace, even to the close of the last great European war, these men augmented the criminal

population and the pauperism of the land, and added to the difficulties of an inefficient police.

Although this was a crying evil, nobody seems to have heard the cry until about seven years ago, when Captain Edward Walter, a retired officer of the army, humanely turned his attention to the matter and founded the *Corps of Commissionaires*, whose curious organization, great public utility, and, we are happy to say, perfect success, seem worthy of consideration at the present time, when the general condition of our army is under anxious consideration.

In 1859 Captain Walter collected seven discharged soldiers, drew up a set of rules for their guidance, gave them a uniform, and set them to work and try to get an honest living—'*virtute et industriâ*' being the motto of the society—as public servants in any proper capacity, but chiefly as errand-men throughout the metropolis. Both the novelty and the utility of the institution recommended it to public favour, and within two years afterwards the number increased to between three and four hundred. This was at the time of the Great Exhibition, where our Commissionaires officiated as money-takers and doorkeepers, besides being of great service to the numerous foreigners then in London, who naturally patronized an institution similar in its rôle or function to that which exists at Paris and other large continental towns; for we need scarcely state that Captain Walter borrowed the idea from the Continent, and was obliged to retain the name for want of a better, altering it slightly, however, by dropping an *n* from the last syllable.

In seeing these Commissionaires, with their tasteful uniform and soldierly bearing, hurrying about the streets, or respectfully on the lookout for a job at their posts, we little imagine the discipline, the thrift, the degree of positive respectability established by their thoughtful founder among a set of men who have been at all times remarkable for the

parade-ground, the men go to their several 'stations,' and wait for engagements. These stations are at the chief places of public resort in the City, the West Central District, the South Western, and the Western. It is chiefly second-class men who are so posted, equivalent to privates in the army or constables in the police. As a rule, they must remain in the vicinity of their posts until engaged, or until the time arrives for leaving; but they must occasionally look in at the neighbouring dépôts to see if any orders for them have arrived. These dépôts are shops at which messages and parcels are received for the men, much as packages are received for the London Delivery Company. If a messenger be absent from his post through illness, his place is at once filled by another man; and employers are requested, if they require a man for a whole day, or for a period exceeding three hours, to send to head-quarters, because the prolonged absence of a Commissionaire from his post injures the system.

It should be known that Captain Walter guarantees the safe delivery of all property to the value of 10*l.* with the ordinary men, and 20*l.* in the case of men wearing chevrons. Only, the public are warned that they must make sure they engage a veritable Commissionaire, by demanding his ticket on all occasions; because some of the men who have been dismissed for misconduct continue to wear the uniform of the corps, and ply for employment. At present there is no legal remedy for the abuse, and the public must therefore look to their own interests in this matter—which are also those of the corps—and endeavour to put a stop to the malpractice by avoiding to employ such interlopers. The production of the *true* ticket-book, with the signature of 'Charles Handford, Sergt.,' is all that is required to prevent the abuse; we say *true* ticket-book, for the interlopers also show a ticket-book, but of course without the signature as above. The tariff, or charge for errands, is as follows:—Half a mile, or under, 2*d.*; one mile, or over

half, 3*d.* By time, 6*d.* per hour, or 2*d.* the quarter-hour. When taken by time, the Commissionaire must do two and a half miles per hour, if walking. For distances exceeding three miles employers will find it better to avail themselves of the time tariff; this, however, must be stipulated at the time of engagement.

The fashionable world has turned our Commissionaires to good account. Many of them are permanently engaged at the various West End clubs, and during the London season they may be seen delivering visiting cards, 'return thanks,' invitations, &c.; and these cards are even sent to the office to be directed by the elegant writers of the establishment, many of whom excel in penmanship, especially a clever Irishman who lost his right arm in the Crimea, but who has contrived to enable his left to beat all comers at pen, ink, and paper. Special men are employed in this fashionable service.

The Commissionaires deliver books, printed circulars, trade-cards, newspapers, &c. (but not objectionable puffs), throughout entire districts. To facilitate this labour, London is divided into blocks, known to the Commissionaires by a name or number. In any case of emergency, such as handbills concerning robbery, &c., the delivery is guaranteed to be very speedy.

From among the Commissionaires we can engage watchmen for night duty; we can, if we are schoolmasters, have drill instruction for our boys; we can, if we are tradesmen, have confidential clerks, who will assign their savings-bank book, if required, by way of security; we can have music, too; for Captain Walter, finding that some of his men had been bandsmen in regiments, or had a sufficient knowledge of music to become so, organized a military band, which delights thousands in St. James's Park, in front of Wellington Barracks, from six o'clock till sunset in the summer evenings. The gross receipts of this band last year amounted to 579*l.* 7*s.* 9*d.* The amount is divided among the men according to pro-

ficiency. Indeed, we may here observe that all the earnings of the men are their own, only excepting the stipulated payments before mentioned.

The tariff of permanent employment is as follows:—Sergeants of the 1st class, 1*l.* 5*s.* per week; sergeants, 1*l.* 1*s.*; corporals, 1*l.*; 1st class commissionaires, 18*s.* For temporary employment: sergeants, 4*s.* per day, 3*s.* half day; corporals and 1st class, 3*s.* 6*d.* per day, and 2*s.* 6*d.* half day. If sent out of their district, sergeants get 4*s.* 6*d.* per day, or 25*s.* per week; corporals and 1st class men, 4*s.* per day, or 22*s.* per week.

It is impossible to ascertain how much the men earn on posts in the streets as messengers, because they are not called upon to pay any percentage on their earnings to the funds of the corps, but it cannot be less than 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, some earning much more.

The number of permanently employed in London and in the country is 250, at wages averaging 20*s.* per week, or value for 20*s.*

Such being the earnings of the men, we are not surprised to learn that the amount of deposits in the savings bank of the corps is 1372*l.*, contributed by 103 depositors.

Such has been the progress of the Corps of Commissionaires, whose strength was, on the 31st March, 340 men, 250 being in permanent employment, 80 engaged on posts, and the remainder at head-quarters, including staff, band, &c.

The average monthly applications for permanent employment of Commissionaires are 20, and the average number filled is 14.

During the previous twelve months 176 new members joined, 44 men were dismissed, 16 died, and there were 56 resignations.

From the Adjutant's Report it appears that the increase of men over last year has been in the ratio of 21 per cent. This has arisen chiefly in consequence of the number of applications from private employers, who, from an experience of seven years, are in a position to appreciate the advantages of selecting their servants from a body of men

whose personal conduct and character are raised to a high and uniform standard. In connection with this subject, we may mention that about two years ago, on the application of the manager of a large mercantile company at Tahiti, two Commissionaires were sent out to that island, where they are now employed in situations requiring considerable confidence and ability. One of these men (who has lost an arm) is in receipt of more than 200*l.* a year, and has already sent home 200*l.* for investment in the savings bank of the corps. The conduct of both has given such entire satisfaction that the directors applied for ten additional men, who, with their families, were sent out last December. The engagement lasts for five years, and will enable the men to return home at its expiration with a competency for life. A circumstance of this nature is not only a high compliment to the system of the corps, but a practical proof of its utility, both as respects its members and the public.

It is also most gratifying to find that H. R. H. the Prince of Wales has not only honoured the corps by becoming one of its governors—has not only shown his interest in it by a subscription to the Endowment Fund, but has also, for the last three seasons, constantly employed one or more of the men.

The War Department has also increased the number of Commissionaires engaged in its various departments, and sanctioned an addition to their rate of pay. Many Commissionaires are engaged as night watchmen, their uniform and regularity being a great advantage, especially as regards the co-operation of the police.

The Endowment Fund, open to general subscription, has lately received a most important addition to its resources from the transfer by its former trustees, into the hands of the Charity Commissioners, of the balance of the 'Times' Crimean Fund, amounting to nearly 10,000*l.*

The institution is now managed—of course still under the direction of the gallant founder—by an executive committee, permanent trustees,

and an administrative board, all consisting of men of exalted position and social influence, the corps itself being under the patronage of Field Marshal H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge.

Besides these, there are 'governors,' who qualify by the payment of £57.; and when it is more generally known that this subscription qualifies a battalion or regiment of 1000 men for perpetual governorship, we have little doubt that many will follow the good example of those who have already qualified, or whose men have already derived benefit from an institution the utility of which has now been tested by the experience of several years, not only as a provision for pensioners of good character, but as a practical example to those classes from which our recruits are obtained—that their ultimate condition is not entirely uncared for.

Of course it is only the want of funds that can prevent such an institution from doing all the good it is adapted to effect. More accommodation and better quarters are required, and we cannot help thinking that it would be worth the while of some enterprising capitalist to invest his money in providing our Commissionaires with suitable headquarters and barracks instead of those which they now occupy in Exchange Court, in the Strand. Such a concern will always be in 'a paying condition.' It will be indefinitely extended rather than be suffered to decline, because it will supply the great deficiency in our military system—some hope of provision for the soldier after concluding his term of service.

In conclusion, we may state that the greater proportion of the men are decorated with from one to five medals; and one of them, Corporal James Shaw, late of the 6th Dragoon Guards, is quite a hero of the service. He served in the East Indies from 1840 to 1855, in the Crimea and Turkey from 1855 to 1856, and then in the East Indies again from 1856 to 1861, thus completing twenty-one years of service.

He served with the 16th Lancers in the campaign against the Mah-

rattas in 1843; was present at the battle of Maharajpore, for which he received a bronze star; served in the Sutlej campaign against the Sikhs in 1845-46, and was present at the battles of Aliwal and Sohraon, for which he received a silver medal with one clasp.

He then volunteered to the 3rd Light Dragoons, and served with the army of the Punjab, 1848-49; was present at the battle of Ramnugger, the passage of the Chenab, the battle of Sodvolapore, the battle of Chilianwallah, and the battle of Goojerat, for which he received a silver medal with two clasps.

In 1852 Shaw volunteered to the 10th Hussars, served in the Crimean campaign, and received the Crimean medal with clasp for Sebastopol, and also the Turkish medal.

Four years afterwards, in 1856, we find the warrior again volunteering, this time to the 6th Dragoon Guards, and proceeding with the regiment to India. He was present at the outbreak of the mutiny at Meerut on the 10th of May, 1857, and at the battles of the Hindon, Budlakee Serai, and the occupation of the heights of Delhi, the siege and storming of Delhi, and all the minor operations during the siege, for which he received a silver medal and clasp. He was present at the capture of Rewaree, the action at Ranaud, the surprise and capture of the City of Funucknugger, and the subsequent reduction of the Taro and Soula districts. He served as provost marshal through the Rohilcund campaign, was present at the battle of Nuguna, the capture of Bareilly, the relief and attack of Shajeehanpore, and the subsequent operations against the Moulvie and Khan Bahadoor Rhan near Mahomdee. He fought at the action of Shahabad, at Buragon, Pasgaon, Rusoolpore, the capture of the Fort of Mitowlee, the surprise of the rebels near Bishwa, in the pursuit by forced marches of Prince Ferrozeshah, and with the force under Brigadier Showers, O.B., which pursued the rebel Tantia Topee to his capture. After all this work, the reader will not be surprised to learn that Corporal Shaw received a medal

for good conduct and long service. And now, here he is, still doing good service, and, we trust, will long continue to do so, an honour to the service and the corps which has provided for him after all his labours. Strange good luck—this man never received a wound, in spite of all his perils!

Success to Captain Walter's benevolent scheme! No doubt he feels amply rewarded for all his

trouble and anxieties by the established success of his undertaking, for throughout his entire career he has given proof of singleness of purpose, the purest disinterestedness and Christian charity; but whatever honour the country can bestow should certainly not be denied to the man who devised and established the means of providing for her discharged and disabled soldiers.

TWO DECEMBER VISIONS.

O! FIERCELY and fastly the north wind is blowing
Across the wild waters that bow to its sway,
And steadily onward the tide is fast flowing,
And swiftly is fading the short winter day.
The breakers are roaring in melody frantic
Around the cruel rocks that are hidden below,
As I stand on the shore of the solemn Atlantic,
And think of December a twelvemonth ago!

O! my queen, if the burst from my heart in its passion
Can follow the tempest across the salt sea,
Though it comes in a rugged and vehement fashion,
I cannot but set its wild utterance free!
I am all alone here, and the sting of my sadness
Is bitterest when the dear dream of the past
Blazes out in its glitter of beautiful gladness,
And blazes—ah me!—but a moment to last.

The snow is fast falling, the sea-birds are calling,
White, white on the waves is the gleam of the foam,
And the darkness of night, in its terror appalling,
Encloses the steamer that's labouring home.
Yet amid the fierce din of the tempest my vision
Is fixed on a picture it lights on afar
With an ocean between; and I smile in derision
Of my folly, for looking in vain for a star.

In the dark hidden heaven I can but remember
How the stars shone in England—so vividly shone
On the clear frosty nights of an English December,
Which was summer to me but 'a twelvemonth ago';
How they shone on the garden, whose echoes replying,
Gave back the waltz music that rang from the hall,
Where to cadences sweetest fair girls were fast flying,
And I had for partner the Queen of the Ball!

Ah! hazel eyes, brilliant as diamonds of story;
Ah! face of all faces the dearest to me,
Set in golden-brown locks that may well be your glory,
I see you amid the wild din of the sea.
I see you, and feel the keen edge of the anguish
That more than the snowstorm is chilling my heart,
And yet I'll not suffer all hope thus to languish,
For perchance our next visions may not be apart.

W. R.

FINIS.

HER lips to mine clang close
 In an agony of delight,
 All passion-pale as the rose
 She wore in her breast that night.
 Her face, in its tearful pain,
 Looked as pitiful-white and fair
 As a lily wet with rain,
 In the night of her loosen'd hair.

Closer and closer yet,
 Knowing the end was nigh,
 With a wild and fierce regret,
 And exceeding bitter cry,
 I held her in that last kiss—
 My own, that should have been;
 My own that was and is,
 Though another stand between.

Though another have bought her for gold,
 My love; and for greed of gain
 A mother her child have sold
 As a slave is sold to the chain,
 I held her while those last sands
 Ran through, and we needs must part,
 And hands must be loosed from hands,
 And heart must be torn from heart.

I held her till, by-and-by,
 I knew, as I watched her face,
 'Twere better that we should die
 In the swoon of that last embrace
 Than live, as remains to do,
 Now the light of life is gone,
 All the dull, grey future through,
 A wearyful life alone.

Alone—though they may succeed,
 And chain her for all that life
 To the other—in shameless greed
 Sell Mammon their child for a wife.
 Alone—for too well I know
 Never more woman's lips shall smite,
 Though the years may come and go,
 My lips, that here sealed to-night.

RUF.

LONDON SOCIETY.

The Christmas Number FOR 1866.

THE EDITOR'S CHRISTMAS GREETING.

COMES the merry Christmas time
Once again !
Joyous chime responds to chime ;
And the strain
With the wind accordant blends,
As the empty woods it rends,
As it bears the driving sleet,
Or sweeps bare the city street
Dimly looming through the frosted window pane.

As with bright Auroral glow,
Pulsing red,
Glisten arctic ice and snow,
So the dead,
So the cold and perished earth,
Wakes to strange unwonted mirth,
And the weary hearts of men
Gleam with sudden joy, as when
They were basking in the summer wholly fled.

While with rapture thus accords
Every heart,
To the lips exulting words
Freely start ;

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And thus We—our year complete—
Haste our myriad friends to greet,
Trusting all may, far and wide,
On this happy Christmas tide,
In its peace, and mirth, and gladness find a part.
In their sorrows may the sad
See the day
That restores them to the glad
And the gay ;
And may those our land has nurs'd
O'er the rolling globe dispers'd,
Find the limit of their pain,
As the old time comes again,
In the hungering of the heart for those away !
'Neath the Spirit of the Time
We have wrought,
As the branch is bright with rime,
So each thought
In these pages is impress'd
With its brightness and its rest,
And 'tis wholly Christmas cheer
That we set before you here
With a welcome from the genial season caught

As an earnest of good-will,
 Year by year,
 Thus our Christmas leaves we fill;
 Drawing near
 Thus, in heart, to hearts we know
 Will with quicken'd pleasure glow
 O'er our pictures and our songs,
 And each tale that mirth prolongs,
 Or gems the drooping eyelid with a tear.

As an earnest, let us own,
 Furthermore,
 Of our sense of kindness shown
 O'er and o'er;
 Of our gratitude to all,
 Whom thus gladly we recall,
 To the friends who, close and near,
 With their smiles our labours cheer,
 And the unknown thousands thronging ev'ry shore.

Nor to those who in our ranks,
 Ever true,
 Bravely toil, be grudged our thanks
 Justly due;

Gentle ladies, gifted men,
 Grasping pencil, wielding pen,
 Tracking fancies, Iris-bright,
 Giving pleasure, helping right,
 Accept the grateful thoughts we tender you.
 And a parting sentence now
 Ere we close;
 Once again the holly bough
 Brightly glows,
 And the mistletoe is hung,
 And the gates are open swung,
 And the yule-log redly flames,
 There is dancing, there are games,
 And youth with age commingling pleasure knows.
 But though pleasures, ne'er forget,
 We would find,
 With our duties, there are yet,
 Intertwined,—
 Duties shaped to help the time,
 Shadowed forth in words sublime;
 When the sin and woe shall cease
 In God's 'glory,' and His 'peace,'
 And 'good-will' encircling, girdle-like, mankind.

CHRISTMAS DAYS AT AN OLD ENGLISH MANOR HOUSE.

BY LORD CHARLES THYNNE.

THERE is a universal law of compensation equalising the balance between good and evil. By the operation of this law winter seems to come in for a larger share of pleasures than falls to the lot of the other seasons, to compensate, as it were, for the darkness and dreariness which are more or less inseparable from the shortness of its days. Its biting frosts and keen winds compel us to find our chief solace within doors, and to depend more upon social intercourse in our homes: and though the sportsman hails the advent of winter, and

'Where from their frozen urns mute springs
 Pour out the river's gradual tide;
 Shrilly the skaters' iron rings
 And voices fill the woodland side;'

and many a sledge invites the young and fair to traverse across a world of frozen snow with noiseless speed, yet the majority look for recreation and amusement at home rather than abroad; and the long winter evenings, in which we gather round the fire, and talk ourselves out with familiar friends, or listen to oft-told tales of interest, dwell longer in the memory, and sink deeper into the heart than any other passages of our childhood or riper years. In winter our thoughts, like our steps, are more circumscribed, and we naturally turn for solace and entertainment to the social circle of our own homes; and in proportion to our appreciation of this kind of life our sympathies are

* Longfellow.

quickened. We feel the charm of each other's society, and are brought more closely together. Heart speaks to heart, as voice answers to voice; and we suffer the diving-bell to go down into our hearts, and to raise up from their hidden depths the precious gifts of sympathy and love. Many a one who is apt to nurse his own sorrow in forgetfulness of others is aroused to a deeper interest in his fellow-creatures by the mere fact of his being brought into closer contact with them, and the glow which is reflected from one kind and loving face kindles a corresponding warmth in others who are brought within its genial influence. At Christmas, which is in England the most festive time of the year, as the 'jour de l'an' is in France, brotherly kindness, and a desire to make others glad and happy, seem to pervade and occupy every heart. The poorest cottage welcomes the festival with decorations of bay and holly; and the cheerful blaze well expresses the gladness that reigns everywhere, and the hospitality which all are ready to give according to their means. Though many of its ancient customs have passed away, and are known only to antiquaries, yet the spirit remains the same, and Christmas-time is still the season when parents and children gather round the fireside, where the old grow young again in the recollection of past times whose memory never dies. The same games, the same lighting up of the old hall, the same deco-

rations are carried on though other generations perform the time-honoured service, and 'the old give place to the young.'

It was not long since that in the ancient Hall of Redland, in one of the midland counties, the Christmas festivities were kept up with the true spirit of the olden time. The Lord of Redland was one of a long line of ancestors, and the family name had become a household word throughout the whole neighbourhood. The tradition of great and noble acts, of kind and generous deeds, surrounded that race which still preserved its immunity from the vices of the age. At the time to which we refer children and grandchildren of all ages were gathered together to keep Christmas, and the first thing which concerned them was to make such preparation as the occasion required. It was not often, certainly not for many years, that there had been such a gathering. Sons had returned from India; married daughters had persuaded their husbands to visit the old place once again at Christmas; and rich and poor were welcome, and every one was made glad according to his need. The Lord of Redland was not one of those who cared only to make people happy in his own way. He tried to find out what might be the bias of his guests, and then his study was to make them happy according to that bias. So it happened that all were gathered together under that roof—all, at least, that death had spared—and yet even they were not altogether forgotten amidst the rejoicings of the survivors.

To do fitting honour to Christmas was the one endeavour of all in that united household. The first thing was to collect together sufficient materials. The house, and the church, which adjoined it, were to be decorated, and a committee of taste was appointed to decide how it should be done. A large quantity of evergreens was brought in; a liberal supply of needles and coarse thread, of webbing, and cord, and wire, of gum-water and brushes, of flour, and flour of brimstone, and everlastings was laid in; and two large rooms in the attics were given up for the purpose, and became the scene of much amusement. Some were appointed to cut off and to collect in baskets the best leaves of common laurel and bay, of holly, Portugal laurel, and ivy; and a separate basket was devoted to each, so that there might be no difficulty in selecting what was required. Others, who belonged to the sewing department, having provided themselves with scissors and gloves, took a long roll of webbing, such as

upholsterers use in making chairs, and began to sew on it, with stout coarse thread, laurel and holly leaves, in such a manner as to conceal the webbing and form a continuous wreath of evergreens. This was done by sewing the leaves on in groups of three, the bases of the leaves touching, but the points diverging from each other and spreading in a fan-like shape. These rows or groups were repeated again and again until about twelve inches of the webbing were covered by leaves of one particular kind. The same operation was performed with the holly, and then again with the laurel, so that they alternated throughout the whole length. The effect was very good, and the crinkled holly contrasted beautifully with the smooth and even surface of the laurel. Bunches of ivy-berries were then dipped into gum-water and afterwards into flour or flour of brimstone, according to the colour that was required, and then fastened here and there with thread or pins. The same plan was adopted with holly-berries. When these wreaths were completed another detachment came with gum-bottles and brushes and smeared the leaves over, which had the effect of permanently glazing them, so as to increase the brilliancy of their colour, and of preserving them from decay. It was astonishing to see how long they retained an appearance of freshness by this process. When these wreaths were dry they were taken to the church and twined round the capitals, or round the pillars, and the effect of them was very beautiful as they lay flat against the stone-work and were yet so full. Similar wreaths were made of the long shoots of fir and leaves of the box-tree. These were used where finer lines were required on the panels of the font and pulpit, and along the mouldings of the old screen which separated the mortuary chapel from the chancel. They were fastened on with needle-points or pins, and were entwined with holly-berries strung together like beads, or with bunches of everlastings of various colours, white, red, yellow, and lilac. The organ gallery was also ornamented with the broad bands of holly and laurel, and in the centre of the panels small wreaths of everlastings were intersected by crosses of green leaves glazed with gum-water. These wreaths of everlastings were made by forming a circle of hay, which was bound over another of thin wire, and upon this the everlastings were fastened. The green leaves, which covered thin strips of wood, intersected the wreaths and contrasted well with the flowers.

The chancel arch was decorated by four long wreaths of a different kind to any of those which have been already described. They were made simply enough, by tying short lengths of evergreens on a rope, so as to conceal the rope, and suggest nothing but green. These were made of two different lengths, and were all fastened from above the key-stone of the arch and then looped up, one on either side, to the capitals, and the others below, so that they had the appearance of festoons, through which the decorations of the chancel might be seen. Above the chancel arch a text, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,' was formed by white everlastings on a blue ground, which was executed thus:—A piece of deal board, not too thick, was covered with blue paper; letters were traced upon it with white chalk, and on these white everlastings were fastened with pins or needle-points hammered into the wood. When finished it was wedged up in its proper place. A similar device ran along over the reredos, below the east window. The legend was, 'Unto us a child is born,' and it was executed in the same manner, with red everlastings on a white ground, and with Maltese crosses at either end of the legend, composed of yellow everlastings. The upper part of the reredos was ornamented with quatrefoils, sunk deep into the alabaster of which it was formed. The quatrefoils were fitted with movable boards, which were covered with white paper, ornamented with crosses of red everlastings. The mortuary chapel was not forgotten, but gave abundant proof that the old adage, 'Out of sight out of mind,' did not hold good at Redland.

The decorations of the church and school having been completed, the old hall occupied the time and attention of every one. They one and all seemed to vie with each other in devising and executing every new device that could be conceived. Cyphers, monograms, and mottoes abounded; and not one member of the family, and scarcely any of the household was overlooked. The hall itself was a quaint place: in height it occupied two stories—the ground-floor and the one above. It was panelled with oak about half way up, and the remainder was of stone without white-wash or plaster. A flat roof of wood, with heavy beams and large bosses, was lighted by large windows to the east, which formed a kind of clerestory. A long gallery ran along at one end, and opposite to it was a kind of canopy in wood, overhanging the principal seat in the centre of a long row of benches,

in front of which stood a massive table, which occupied the whole length of the hall. Coats-of-arms, crests, and mottoes formed the chief ornament of this quaint baronial hall. Our friends wisely suffered themselves to be guided by the architecture of the place, and made all their decorations subservient to it. Evergreens decorated, but did not obscure the coats-of-arms; and all the cyphers and monograms, which were executed in everlastings of different colours on a coloured or white ground, framed by evergreens, served to heighten, not to mar, the peculiarities of the old place. Coronas of evergreens and berries hung from the bosses in the ceiling, and lighted up the hall to perfection; while a cornice of green leaves surmounted the oak panel, and was carried down the angles. But the chief point, the centre of all attraction, was the canopy which overhung the seat of honour, which the Lord of Redland occupied, surrounded by his children, grandchildren, household, and dependants. It was on this that they lavished all their care and ingenuity. Bent upon giving honour to whom honour was due, the top of the canopy, which projected about three feet, and which was richly carved, was decorated with wreaths and festoons of green leaves, and thin lines of leaves and berries followed the mouldings. Inside the family arms were painted on a shield, and the monogram of the revered owner of the hall was beautifully devised, and executed in white everlastings on a dark-blue ground within a frame of holly leaves and berries, and the whole was surmounted by the legend which is the motto of a noble house: 'God's providence is my inheritance.'

When the long table was amply provided with provisions, and the whole family assembled at dinner on Christmas Day, and the ancient hall was lighted, with its coronas of evergreens and silver sconces against the wall, it was a cheering sight that will always be treasured up in the memory. Later in the evening the whole household were assembled to receive at their master's hands the Christmas presents which had been provided with so much care and forethought. No one was forgotten, and every one found that no pains had been spared to ascertain and procure what was most needed; and they one and all looked forward to the ball which, it was announced, was to take place on New Year's Eve, when the tenantry and neighbours were invited to unite with them in welcoming the coming year in the old hall of Redland Manor.

THE SMALL HOUSE OVER THE WATER.

By MARK LEMON.

SHORTLY after the opening of Waterloo Bridge, in 1817, a number of moderate-sized houses, intended for private residences, sprung up on the Surrey side of the river, and have continued to increase until this day. They were soon tenanted by persons who let them out in lodgings, and who themselves, not infrequently, occupied the kitchen and the attics, thus contriving to live rent-free, and occasionally making a small addition to their incomes.

The heads of houses were rarely seen except at early morn and dewy eve, being generally engaged at some employment in the city, or at the neighbouring wharfs and manufactories. They were rarely recognized in connection with their homes, which were associated more immediately with their helpmates; and Mr. John Morgan, principal messenger at a Lombard Street banking-house, was really nobody at No. 13, Coburg Street, although he paid the rent, taxes, and water-rates. No; it was Mrs. Morgan who exercised all the patronage of that establishment, and received all the homage of the vendors of milk and butter, butcher's meat, bread and grocery, green and foreign.

Mrs. Morgan was a capital manager, as her house was invariably the picture of tidiness. Windows which shone even in a fog; a door-step so white that a printer's devil— proverbially the most reckless of mortals—would have walked tip-toe to the knocker or glittering bell-pull; blinds and curtains as spotless as they could be in London,—all proclaimed the exemplary housewife. All their rooms were let furnished—comfortably furnished; and neither chair nor sofa gave out the odour of hay-bands, as is too frequently the case with those ornaments of genteel lodgings. Substantiality was the pervading character of Mrs. Morgan's furniture, from parlour to garret, and there was nearly as much timber in her four-posters as in the beams and joists of 'the builder's house,' in which she lived.

Her parlours were occupied by twin brothers, who were twin clerks in the Bank of England. The Siamese were not more attached than Saul and Jonathan Black. They rose at the same hour; were hungry, thirsty, sleepy at the same moment; and, as Mrs. Morgan once said, 'they was, for the matter of that, no more trouble than one person,

though they paid double rent.' We shall have a little more to do with them, but we will pass up to the first floor, rented by Mr. and Mrs. Snidberry.

Mrs. Snidberry was exceedingly clever at mending lace and taking up dropped stitches in silk stockings, realizing thereby a very acceptable income. Sniddy, as she called her husband, was a clerk to Madame Delafone—the court milliner, as Mrs. Sniddy always informed you,—but, of course, in that capacity, not on speaking terms with the Bank of Englanders, who always spoke of Sniddy as the milliner's book-keeper. The Snidberrys were good-natured people, and took small offence at the pretentiousness of the parlours; though Sniddy would now and then look in at the Bank of England when passing, to get change for a five-pound note from Saul or Jonathan (who were pay-clerks), and indicate some doubt as to the respectability of the Bank by ringing each coin on the counter, after weighing it on the end of his finger. We shall have to return to the first-floor presently, and must ascend to the rooms overhead, occupied by Mrs. Melville and her daughter Cora.

Mrs. Melville was an actress at the Coburg Theatre, then in the zenith of its respectability and fame. A more quiet, lady-like person than Mrs. Melville could not be desired for a lodger; and as for her little daughter, Cora, she might be described as 'an angel in the house,' so pretty, cheerful, and well-behaved was she at all times. Cora was just twelve years old.

Mrs. Melville had acquired considerable reputation in the provinces; and as her benefits had been largely patronized, she was known to have saved money; and her success in London justified the expectation that she would soon attain a very remunerative position in her arduous profession. She always walked to and from the theatre, whatever the weather, and when not engaged in her professional duties, either in study at home or in rehearsing or acting on the stage, she employed herself, as Mrs. Morgan said, 'in making or mending for herself and little Cora,' so that a more industrious, commendable woman than Mrs. Melville could not be found on the Surrey side of the water.

She had now and then a professional visitor, and almost a daily one in Mr

Reuben Reynolds, who occupied the front attic. He was a young man about two-and-twenty, a portrait-painter by profession—but he had evidently mistaken his vocation. Originally apprenticed to a house-painter, he had aspired to signboards; and from a small amount of success in that line, had believed in his capacity to pourtray ‘the human face divine.’ He made a very limited income by his profession, and that principally derivable from his good fortune in being appointed painter in ordinary to a public-house portrait-club. Reuben was, nevertheless, a very temperate, abstemious young man, never yielding to biblical indulgences, except in the way of business, upon club nights. He had the knack of catching a likeness; and that was all satisfactory to his unartistic patrons. Besides, he was always liberal with gold chains, pins, brooches, and finger-rings; and his waistcoats were more diversified in pattern than any other of the portrait-club artists, who generally limited themselves to an unvarying brilliant yellow.

Reuben Reynolds had also taught himself the violin; and it was to impart this knowledge of the gay science to Cora that made him such a frequent visitor to the second floor. Mrs. Melville had no capacity for music; but Cora was exceedingly apt in catching a tune, and, having a very sweet voice, her mother had long debated with herself upon the propriety of having her taught to sing and play. But she had one great fear—a fear not uncommon with persons of her profession—she feared lest the cultivation of this accomplishment might give Cora a taste for the stage; and she knew, from her own experience and observation, what an undesirable pursuit that would be for one as sensitive and beautiful as Cora. She remembered what disappointment, humiliation, and insult had beset her own early youth (and she had been nursed almost upon the stage); and although chastity, charity, and goodness in all shapes may be found in the green-room of a theatre, there also were many vices—many temptations. No; she would not have had Cora an actress for twenty times her own success.

As Mrs. Melville’s engagements had hitherto compelled her to be continually moving from town to town, Cora had not received any very regular instruction, as the charges of a boarding-school were more than could have been honestly incurred, as at the best the general actor’s income is precarious. Reuben Reynolds, therefore, found a pupil also in the art of writing and the

science of arithmetic, and so he came to love Cora with a brother’s love, which stood her in good stead in the time to come.

Mr. and Mrs. Morgan slept in the back attic: fortunate indeed were their lodgers in having two such worthy people to provide for them. Exact in all their dealings, no petty advantages, pilferings, or contentions ever disturbed the internal economy of No. 13, Coburg Street; and had Asmodeus lifted off the roof of that humble dwelling-house, he would have declared it to have been occupied by the Happy Family. But, as old Capulet says—

‘All things that we ordained festival
Turn from their office to black funeral,
Our instruments to melancholy bells,
Our wedding cheer to a sad bridal feast,
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,
Our bridal flowers serve for a bridal corse,
And all things change them to the contrary;’

and Mrs. Morgan’s was to be a house of mourning. Mrs. Melville fell sick—sick unto death. As she became conscious of her danger, her affliction was very pitiable to witness. It was not from the fear of death, or from an inordinate love of life, that her sorrow proceeded. Had she had a husband to whose care she could have confided her beloved child, the grave would have claimed no victory, and death would have had no sting.

But to leave Cora alone, friendless, without one relative to nurture her and guide her, was indeed to make the final parting terrible. The poor actress, through all the changes of her strange profession, had never been unmindful of the One who careth for the widow and the fatherless, and comfort was to come to her now that she most needed it. Good Mrs. Morgan, and her husband, John, had taken counsel together, and the mother’s heart was quieted by the assurance that her child should be unto them as a daughter so long as they were spared to live. From the hour that that assurance was given, a peaceful calm came to the dying woman, and she would talk to Cora of the solemn parting which was at hand, and of the happy meeting which was to be beyond the grave.

Mrs. Melville had never spoken of her husband as of one dead—nor, indeed, as of one living; but now that Mrs. Morgan had become, as it were, the future mother of Cora, she, with many painful efforts, told what follows:—

When Mrs. Melville was eighteen—she was Clarissa R—— then—her

father, mother, and herself were members of a small provincial company. From her earliest years she had been engaged in a theatre; and, though her parents were well-conducted people, she had imbibed all her ideas of life and its duties from the artificial world in which she had lived. Love and marriage were always on her lips and in her ears, and she necessarily regarded those conditions of life as the principal objects for attainment.

At that time a young man joined the company, under the name of Charles Melville, and, though frequently twitted with the assumption of this name, he always asserted it to be his real one. He was gentle, manly in his manners and conversation, a very fair actor, and possessed of a much better wardrobe than usually belongs to young aspirants for histrionic honours. He was well received, out of the theatre, by the men in the various towns visited by the company, but his convivial qualities often led him into excesses which rendered him rather unpopular with the more respectable inhabitants. After a time, his attentions to Miss R— became apparent to every one in the theatre; and at last the parents of Clarissa remonstrated with their daughter, and also with Melville. The offending admirer protested against the assumption of the parents, and promised to be more guarded in his conduct for the future; and so the matter appeared to rest. But the young man had conceived a passion, which he believed to be love, for Clarissa, and—there is nothing new or strange in the story—she had given him her heart. The teaching of the stage now came into practice. The cruel parents were to be deceived; secret notes, clandestine meetings were to console the lovers until an elopement and marriage brought the usual dénouement.

Mr. and Mrs. R— refused to continue members of the same company as their undutiful daughter and treacherous son-in-law; but the manager would not accept their resignation, and dismissed the youthful offenders to find an engagement elsewhere. This was not very difficult of accomplishment, as Miss R— had already made some noise in her profession, and 'Mr. and Mrs. Melville (late Miss Clarissa R—)' soon occupied a separate line in the bills of the Birmingham theatre.

The young couple might have lived happily and prosperously; but soon after the birth of Cora (Pizarro was then the rage) Melville became so irregular in his habits that dismissal

from the theatre was more than once threatened, whilst his behaviour at home became violent and degrading. Mrs. Melville bore with him patiently, indulgently, and only in his sober moments sought to reason with him, and to urge the abandonment of courses which were producing ruin to him and unhappiness to both. At times he would listen to these 'lectures,' as he called them, in silence; at others he would display great violence of temper and object to be schooled, and then perhaps absent himself for the rest of the day, coming to the performance of his duties in the theatre excited by drink.

The managerial patience was at last exhausted, and Mr. Melville received his *congé*—unknown, however, to his wife. On her return from the theatre one night, she found, as usual, her husband absent. She went to her bedroom to remove her bonnet and cloak, when, to her surprise, she saw the contents of the drawers strewn upon the floor, and the writing-desk, in which was kept the small accumulation of their earnings, forced open and its contents abstracted. Alarmed, she hastened down to the landlady of the house, who had not gone to bed she knew, and made known the state of matters above.

'Then it's Mr. Melville that's done it,' said the landlady. 'I heard him making a great noise overhead—and stay, here's a note he left for you, ma'am.'

There were about a dozen lines, not more, but they told a terrible story—a story that was not to be played out for years. Melville was gone from his wife and child for ever. She had outlived his liking, as he had done hers: better that they should be free of each other; and so he had gone, never to return. Poor wife! she loved him still! loved the father of her child, with all 'the forgivingness of woman's love!—and he had left her for ever! There was no acting in the drooped head and the prostrate body, that seemed for many minutes to have parted with life at the cruel words which had been just now read.

From that time until the day of her death Mrs. Melville had heard nothing of her wicked husband. Nothing, at least, that she revealed, even to her generous friend Mrs. Morgan; but she had found once on a time, after Melville's departure, the fragment of a letter which seemed to refer to some great wickedness of a son to a father.

'That you are my son,' a trembling hand had written, 'is my misery and disgrace. I am only sustained by the

knowledge that all that human care, patience, and forbearance could do for your rescue, I have done. I will do no more, as I should consider myself a partner in your profligacy did I supply you with the means for its indulgence. God pardon——' And there the fragment ended, and the ragged paper bore marks of fire.

Mrs. Melville felt her cheeks redden and her brain throb as she read those terrible words. There was a small, dull fire burning in the grate, and she placed the fragment of a letter in its centre, and watched the paper until it was consumed.

The writing was destroyed, utterly, converted into impalpable dust, but its meaning was imprinted on her memory to be always associated with her husband and the father of her child. It would be buried with her, never to be read by Cora, to trouble her innocent soul as it had done her own for years and years.

Mrs. Melville died, and Cora, young as she was, realized to the full that indescribable sense of isolation which comes only, we believe, at the grave-side of a mother.

Little Cora's little fortune amounted to something less than a hundred pounds, after payment of her mother's funeral expenses, and this sum Mr. John Morgan invested with his employers in the city. The girl's education was now more regularly conducted, though Mr. Reuben continued his lessons in music and writing and such other accomplishments as were not taught at the day-school which Miss Cora attended. Mr. Reuben also 'clubbed' a trifle with the Morgans for Cora's weekly expenses, and would not be denied, as, poor fellow, he too was almost alone in the world, and had cheated himself into the idea that Cora was his little sister. So Cora continued to progress until she had attained her fourteenth year, and then, by the good offices of the Snidberrys, Madame Delafone, the court milliner, was induced for a very moderate premium to take Cora as an apprentice to the noble art of which she herself was such an accomplished administrant. Night and morning, therefore, might Mr. Sniddy be seen walking to and from the great house of business of Madame Delafone, the court milliner in Pall Mall, with pretty, graceful Cora Melville on his arm, and indulging in the self-deceit that the admiring passers-by believed her to be his daughter. Sniddy would gladly have adopted the lonely girl had such a recognition been of any use to her, but certain cormorant nephews

and nieces, on both sides the wedding ring, kept Mr. Sniddy's balance very low at his bankers.

Cora advanced rapidly in her new vocation, displaying much natural taste and capacity, and having withal an easy graceful manner that contrasted very favourably with her less gifted companions. Madame Delafone did not fail to notice these advantages in her young pupil, and, after a year and a half at the needle, promoted Cora to the show-room, where she had to attend upon the distinguished ladies who honoured the court milliner with their custom. The faculty of imitation is common to most women, and Cora soon acquired that ease of manner which distinguishes the well-bred among our countrywomen, and this, added to her personal beauty and graceful figure, made her rather conspicuous among her associates. As for Mrs. Morgan, she fairly idolised her little *protégée*, and almost regretted the announcement Cora made one evening, that for the future she was to have a salary—yes, money for her services, and more than enough to supply all her wants in clothes and washing!

Cora's seventeenth birthday was at hand, and Mrs. Morgan confided to Mrs. Snidberry how much she desired to give a little party on the occasion; but the parlours were limited in space, even if the twins would place them at her disposal for the evening. Mrs. Snidberry wouldn't hear of the parlours—unless for a supper room, and insisted upon her own apartments being devoted to the evening's festivities. Besides, there was room for a dance, if Mr. Reuben would play the fiddle, as no doubt he would be only too happy to do; and there was the loo table for a round game, and, in fact, the first floor had natural claims to be used for a party.

And so it was all arranged, and Saul and Jonathan willingly resigned possession of their rooms, and waived all considerations of superiority over the milliner's book-keeper, and accepted Mrs. Morgan's invitation—for they had a bowing acquaintance with the pretty Cora, and were only too glad to improve it.

The invitations were, of course, limited, being issued only to the inmates of No. 13, two nieces and a nephew of the Snidberrys, Miss Ruak, the baker's daughter, and one of the junior clerks in the Lombard Street bank, whose mother, being the housekeeper to that establishment, was a personal friend of Mr. Morgan. Shall we make sport of that happy gathering and scoff at their simple enjoyment? Shall we sneer at the rude plenty and hot viands of that

honest supper, and affect an indigestion at the heartiness of its consumption? No; rather let our poor goosequill turn up its nib and refuse to transcribe another word of this story.

Of the after consequences we have a right to speak, as they have a material influence on some of the friends whom we have introduced to you.

From that pleasant evening a marked change came over the twin clerks. They were moody frequently, and there seemed to be an absence of that unre-served confidence which had hitherto distinguished their peaceful lives. It had been their Sunday custom to rise early and go forth in search of popular preachers or pleasant suburban churches, and so combine a certain innocent amusement with their devotions. All that was changed. With one consent they seemed to desire to patronize the local church frequented by the Morgans and Miss Melville, although neither of the twins sought further intercourse than a passing 'good morning,' or, in extreme cases, a remark on the weather. Saul had never accounted for this change to Jonathan, neither had Jonathan alluded to the subject to Saul, but both became aware after a time that there was a secret between them for the first time in their lives. And not only a secret, but one which seemed to beget an unpleasantness of feeling towards each other, to which they had hitherto been utter strangers.

Such a state of affairs must have an end, or their brotherly love would suffer; and so Saul said, one evening, when they had been a full hour over their tea,

'Jonathan, something has occurred to change you of late.'

'Indeed, Saul, I have thought the same of you, I confess, and could not account for it.'

'I think I can,' said Saul, with a deep sigh. 'You look upon me as a rival.'

'A rival, brother!' replied Jonathan, colouring up to his eyes. 'A rival in what?'

'In your love for Cora Melville,' said Saul. 'Am I not right?'

Jonathan held down his head as he spoke. 'And if I have thought so, have I been wrong?'

'I never told you a lie, Jonathan,' answered Saul, 'nor will I do so now. I have a feeling towards that lovely girl that I never had for any other woman. Do we sympathise in this as we have done in all other matters, Jonathan?'

'Yes—yes!' cried Jonathan; 'I am sure I should love her; feeling, as I do, the greatest admiration for what I have already seen of her.'

'Then it is well, Jonathan, that we have come to this understanding now—now that we may escape from the misery that might come to both of us.'

'What do you mean?' asked Jonathan.

'This, brother; I could not ask or expect you to make a sacrifice which I feel I could not make myself. I could not ask you to leave the chance of winning Cora Melville to me, any more than I could say 'yes to you, did you make such a request to me. Do you follow me?' }

'Yes; and guess what you are about to propose.'

'The only wise course open to us, my dear old Jonathan. Let us beat a retreat: let us give up these rooms at once, and turn our backs upon this enchantress, beautiful and charming as she is.'

'But who might have brought dissension between us from her very goodness,' said Jonathan. 'We will go from here; and the sooner the better, old boy.'

So Mrs. Morgan was surprised the next morning to receive a week's notice from the parlours, but conveyed in the kindest and the most regretful expressions; and the twins, Saul and Jonathan, took their departure, without any attempt to say good-bye to Cora—although their parting from Mrs. Morgan was not without tears on the part of the lady, and sundry spasmodic contortions of face on the part of the gentlemen.

For the first time for five years did 'Apartments to let' appear in the windows of No. 13; and so unusual was the circumstance, that milk and butter, butchers' meat and grocery, green and foreign, were questioned over and over again by the astonished neighbours.

On the second day after the exhibition of the placard in Mrs. Morgan's window a gentleman applied to see the apartments. As the rooms were unexceptionable, and the terms very moderate, they were accepted. He gave the name of Mr. Morton, and referred Mrs. Morgan to a legal firm in the city to vouch for his respectability.

Mr. Morton's appearance was prepossessing; as he had the bearing of a gentleman, was good-looking, about forty years of age, with a clear mellow voice that was pleasing to the ear. Inquiries were to be made the following day, and the day after he proposed to take possession. The gentlemen in the city to whom reference was to be made were known by repute to Mr. Morgan, and a satisfactory report having been

obtained from one of their clerks, Mr. Morton became the tenant of the parlours at No. 13. He proved not quite such a model lodger as the twins had been; as he smoked a great deal, and on the second night of his occupancy came home rather late, and kept his bed long into the morning the next day. Of course he had a right to consult his own tastes and habits.

'I'm rather late this morning, Mrs. Morgan,' he said, as that lady placed his breakfast on the table, 'but I was detained by some friends last night, and I can't do without my modicum of sleep.'

'O, don't mention it, sir,' replied Mrs. Morgan; 'you didn't disturb no one.'

'By-the-by, was that your daughter I saw return yesterday evening, in company of an elderly gentleman?' asked Mr. Morton, carelessly.

'Well, no, sir; she's not exactly my daughter, though I have had sole care of her for rather more than five years—ever since her poor mother died in this house.'

'Her mother died here, did she?' asked Morton, filling his mouth with egg.

'Yes, sir,' continued Mrs. Morgan, who liked a little gossip, and especially when she could talk of Cora. 'The poor lady was a play actress, without any one that cared for her, and so Morgan and I took charge of Cora when she died, and have helped to bring her up; and a dear, clever girl she is.'

'Clever, ay?' repeated Mr. Morton; 'can read and write, I suppose?'

'And sing and play on the fiddle, a little,' said Mrs. Morgan.

'Play on the fiddle!—that's a funny instrument for a young lady to practise,' said Mr. Morton, laughing. 'How came she by that accomplishment?'

And then Mrs. Morgan entered into the full particulars of Cora's little story; and had not finished even when Mr. Morton had done his breakfast.

When Mrs. Morgan had ended, Mr. Morton said,

'Very interesting, 'pon my word. Does she ever speak of her father?'

'O dear, no,' replied Mrs. Morgan; 'she never knowed him.'

'But—but she may have heard of him from her mother.'

'I think not, sir, if I might give an opinion,' said Mrs. Morgan, mysteriously. 'I am afraid he was a bad man—a very bad man.'

'Judge not, lest ye be judged,' said Mr. Morton, gravely, adding, 'When does your husband come home?'

'About six, sir; in fact we have tea

at six,' replied Mrs. Morgan, rather surprised at the inquiry.

'Then when you have had your tea I should be glad to see you both on a subject interesting to us all,' said Mr. Morton. 'I shall get a chop in the city, Mrs. Morgan, so you will not make any preparations for my dinner.'

Mrs. Morgan was greatly perplexed by this conversation; and an interview which she had with Mrs. Snidberry did not make matters clearer. There was nothing for it but to wait Mr. Morgan's return, and Mr. Morton's revelation, whatever that might be.

Mr. Morgan returned punctually at half-past five, and the parlours followed almost immediately afterwards. The worthy bank-messenger was quite as much puzzled as his wife, and made a most indifferent tea, scalding his throat and leaving his water-cresses untouched—an almost unparalleled instance of forgetfulness on his part.

Having put on his best coat and a clean cravat, Mr. Morgan, preceded by his wife, made his way to the parlours. Mr. Morton received them very pleasantly, and, by a few judicious remarks about the weather, and the agreeableness of the locality of No. 13, contrived to stop Mr. Morgan rubbing his hands, smoothing his hair, and otherwise displaying his nervousness.

'I have asked for this interview,' said Mr. Morton, after a brief pause, 'to put you in possession of some facts which it is important should be known to you. During our conversation this morning, Mrs. Morgan, you told me that your ward, Miss Melville, had never known or even heard of her father, and that he was a very bad man.'

'Yes, sir, I believe I did,' replied Mrs. Morgan, boldly.

'It is well that Miss Melville has not heard of her father, if your impression of him should have accompanied the information, and I am grateful that she has been spared that injustice.'

'You, sir!' exclaimed Mr. and Mrs. Morgan.

'Yes, I,' said Mr. Morton, solemnly. 'You no doubt derived your impression of Mr. Melville's character from Mrs. Melville?'

'Yes, certainly,' replied Mrs. Morgan; 'but I never heard of him until the poor creature was dying.'

'Had she lived until now, madam, she would have told a different tale,' said Mr. Morton; 'and it is to disabuse you of the wrong you do Mr. Melville, as he was called, that I have asked you here.'

'Mr. Melville' was more "sinned against than sinning," believe me. The younger son of an avaricious father, and an evil-tempered, unfeeling, unforgiving man. For a mere boyish fault, that wicked father turned his son, penniless and friendless, upon the world to starve—to perish. Melville had a brave heart, and he fought his way out of the gutter. He married, as you have heard; and you have heard also, he deserted his wife and child.'

'Yes, sir, I did hear as much,' answered Mrs. Morgan; 'and wicked it was of him to do so.'

'No; he left them in charge of a trusted friend, whilst he resolved to find in another land the independence he could not obtain for them in this. But Fate, or Providence, or what you will, was against him. The ship in which he sailed for a distant land was storm-driven, and after days of almost unparalleled suffering, Melville was wrecked on a lonely part of the coast of South Africa. The savage wretches who crowded the beach butchered the unfortunate seamen whom the sea had placed at their mercy. Butchered all except Melville and a young lad. Happier for them had they too died with their comrades. For fifteen years were those two white men the slaves of their savage captors. Hewers of wood and drawers of water, until at last life became so burthensome, that at all hazards Melville and his companion resolved to escape or perish. They succeeded at the expense of great suffering, and two months ago found their way back to England. Melville to find his father dead, but rendering the tardy justice of providing his injured son with the means of decent existence and the right to resume his name of Morton.'

'Good gracious!' cried Mrs. Morgan, 'and are you Mr. Melville, sir?'

'I am; and you hear, madam, how much appearances have wronged me,' replied Morton, producing sundry papers from the pocket of his coat. 'These papers will satisfy you that I speak the truth. There is a copy of the certificate of my marriage with Clarissa R——, though in the name I then assumed of Melville. There, the certificate of my daughter's baptism.'

'And what do you—I mean, why have you come here, sir?' asked Mrs. Morgan.

'Why, Mrs. Morgan, can you ask?' said Morton. 'I have come to claim my child, to find in her love some compensation for the sufferings I have undergone. I trust to you to break this matter to her. You will do so gently,

carefully, Mrs. Morgan, and add to the many obligations I already owe you.'

Mrs. Morgan was very sad at heart at this discovery of Cora's father, but she promised to break the intelligence to her foster-daughter, and prepare her for a meeting with Mr. Morton.

You have heard Mr. Morton's story, now please hear ours.

Morton was, as he had said, the father of Cora, and had now resumed his real name. But he had been a wicked son, even to the extent of stealing his mother's jewels, and forging upon his father. He left England, not to be wrecked, however, and to undergo the life of suffering which he had described, but to wander about America as actor, slave-jobber, rowdy, until he heard of his father's death, and that the forgiving parent had left his more than prodigal son a weekly annuity of four pounds. He returned to England, and more from curiosity than better feeling, inquired the fate of his wife and child. Had Cora proved less attractive than he had found her, she might have remained a charge to good Mrs. Morgan; but when he saw her the lovely, graceful woman she was, he had conceived a scheme for the future which would turn to his profit and to the procuration of more liberal means for his sensual indulgences.

Cora was too ready to believe her father's story, and even the Snidberrys, who were more worldly wise than the rest of the inmates of No. 13, were induced to give credence to the extraordinary statement, the more so as Mr. Morton repeated it verbatim, at their especial sollicitation, two or three times. Cora was delighted with her father, and he soon obtained the ascendancy over her necessary to carry out the plan he had proposed to himself. Imperceptibly to her, he created in her mind a consciousness of her personal advantages, and by degrees led her to see degradation and drudgery in the occupation which had hitherto been so agreeable to her. He then hinted at an escape from this sordid life, and told her of many who had risen to wealth and distinction by the aid of less attractions than she possessed, and by the exercise of far inferior talents than those with which she was endowed. Cora's ambition was aroused, her discontent increased by what her father told her day by day, and at last she requested to be put in the way to fame and fortune. His end was gained. Cora was to become an actress, and make market of her beauty and her accomplishments. The consequence of this determination

of Cora and her father was almost fatal to Mrs. Morgan. That good creature wrung her hands, wept, and would not be comforted, despite all the consolation of her husband.

'It ain't our faults, my dear,' he said. 'We never put such notions into her head. You ain't theatrical, and I ain't theatrical, and whatever comes of it she can't blame us. He's done it all—he's her father, and knows best.'

'No he doesn't! he doesn't!' exclaimed Mrs. Morgan. 'Her poor dear mother would have rather seen her in her grave first, and so would I.'

As for Reuben Reynolds he hardly knew whether to be sorry or glad. He was not altogether ignorant of the trials and temptations to which a young and beautiful actress was exposed; but then he had such a high opinion of Cora, that he hoped only that the utmost good would follow this change of employment.

Cora was greatly grieved at the distress of her old friends, but her father had gained such an ascendancy over her, and had so excited her dormant vanity, that she resolutely persisted in carrying out the plans he had formed for her advancement.

An engagement at Bath was soon procured for her, and her success was sufficient to encourage her in a continuance in the profession. After a twelvemonth's earnest study and practice, Cora's fame reached the London green-rooms, and led to a probationary appearance at Covent Garden Theatre.

She made her *début* in *Beatrice*, and her graceful figure, charming face, and elegant manners, combined with a sweet voice and intelligent interpretation of the part, won her an enthusiastic reception from the audience. The result was a two years' engagement at fourteen pounds a-week—a large salary in those days.

The entrance to the green-room of the Theatre Royal was then a privilege much coveted by the men of fashion, and was restricted to certain patrons of the theatre and persons distinguished in art, science, and literature. No one was admissible except in evening dress, the utmost decorum was preserved (indeed, as it is now), and the place had all the charms of a most agreeable *conversazione*. Miss Melville was the star of the season, and the most distinguished visitors eagerly sought an introduction to her. Mr. Morton, her father, being a very presentable person, soon became intimate with most of the younger *habitués* of the green-room, and possessing gentlemanly manners and

great convivial qualities, he passed part of his days and nearly all his nights in what was called 'good company.' His constitution, however, had been too much tried by a life of excesses to bear this new strain upon it, and before the expiration of his daughter's engagement he was overtaken by disease and died.

Cora was now alone in the world which had been chosen for her. The Morgans had never recovered her abandonment of them, and having sold off their furniture, had retired into the country to live on their savings and an annuity granted to Mr. Morgan by his old employers, who had been saved from a great loss by a discovery made by their faithful messenger. The Snidberrys had also left London, having come into a small independence unexpectedly. They fled to avoid the cormorants who, on this accession of wealth, worried uncle and aunt more persistently than ever.

Mr. Reuben Reynolds was the only one of Cora's old friends that remained to her, and he was her guide and counsellor on many occasions of difficulty.

St. John's Wood was then establishing itself, and Cora occupied a small house near the top of Baker Street. Her establishment was a very modest one, consisting of two female domestics and a maid named Grace, who acted as her chaperone and dresser at the theatre.

It was impossible for Cora to avoid being annoyed by the marked attentions of many of the 'men-about-town,' who conceived that the actress must necessarily be gratified at their fulsome compliments, and more insulting advances. But Cora managed to rebuke their impertinences without giving them positive offence, although she made it a rule to return all the presents which came to her, whenever she could detect the donor. As this was her general rule, she said, no one ought to be offended by it. All presents did we say?—that is not the truth; for one happy fellow was privileged to provide her bouquets; and a certain diamond ring which she always wore, as though it were a talisman, was whispered to have been the gift of Mr. Henry Charleston, the wealthy stockbroker of Cadogan Place. He was a constant visitor to the green-room whenever Cora played. He waited for her behind the scenes, and conducted her to her little hired *vis-à-vis*, and lingered always a few minutes before he bade her good-night. They had been seen walking together in Kensington Gardens and the Regent's Park, and twice at least

entering St. John's Wood chapel together. Those who know anything of the gossip of a theatre, can imagine the story which was constructed out of these slight materials.

It was Christmas Eve—or rather the morning preceding Christmas Day; and, as Cora was to be 'out of the bill' during the run of the forthcoming pantomime, she had no business to call her to the theatre, and had gone therefore to take a walk in the park adjoining. 'The season' was made the excuse by Captain Smoucher, and three or four other men of his kidney, to make morning calls at Cora's house, and, as she was from home, leaving sundry Christmas gifts for her acceptance.

Grace, Cora's maid, smiled as she received these presents, and the silly compliments which accompanied them, and told her cousin, Sally—who had called to wish her a merry Christmas and have a glass of hot elder wine—what labour in vain the poor fellows were taking.

'Come up into the drawing-room, and see what we've got this morning,' said Grace to her cousin. 'Here's presents enough to set up a stall in the Soho Bazaar, and yet I'll be bound missus will scarcely notice one of them. She's a strange whimsical creature; very hasty, but very kind-hearted; and I should be happy enough if I thought we were quite respectable—Mr. Charleston, for instance. It's an odd way of wooing, to accompany every note with an arm-chair, a sofa, a piano; yet that's the way with him, and mistress receives them as a matter of course. He is always about the theatre; walks or rides home with us; stays to supper lately: I hardly know what to do.'

'It certainly does look odd,' observed Grace's cousin; 'but I don't see what you can do but give warning.'

'I'm not willing to do that,' replied Grace: 'mine's a good place, and I never see any harm going on. Here, look at this!' and she pointed to a Tonbridge-ware box, with a view of the Pavilion at Brighton painted on the top. 'I wonder why this rubbishy box is allowed a place upon the drawing-room table. A view of the Pavilion at Brighton—that's a novelty!'

A double knock at the door took Grace to the window.

'Here she is from her morning constitutional, as she calls it. Run up to my room, Sally.' And Sally made a hasty retreat.

Cora came in from her walk in the

fresh frosty air, her lovely cheeks all aglow from the exercise.

'Such a delicious morning, Grace,' she said, throwing her small sable muff upon the sofa. 'I declare I could have walked for another hour. O, you've had callers, I see,' as Captain Smoucher's flowers and packet caught her eye: 'who has been?'

'Captain Smoucher, ma'am,' replied Grace, 'called, and left them flowers and parcel,' opening the latter, and displaying a pretty sandal-wood box, filled with Paris gloves.

'What an oaf the man is!' exclaimed Cora; and then muttered, 'O Henry! when am I to be rescued from these insults? Here, Grace, take away these gloves and this box.'

'Not this beautiful box?' asked Grace, in surprise: 'surely, madam, it might take the place of this old one.'

Cora, clasping the despised Tonbridge-ware in both her hands, exclaimed,

'That was the first treasure of my girlhood, and now contains what I prize more than all the jewels I possess. Some day, Grace, you shall see its contents—and that soon, very soon, I hope.' She paused for a moment, and then added, 'Has Mr. Reynolds sent back the picture?'

'The portrait of your mother?—no, madam,' replied Grace. 'He has had it long enough, I'm sure; he walks in and out of this house——'

'Grace!' interrupted her mistress, 'Mr. Reynolds is a most dear friend—a true friend; not like Captain Smoucher and his tribe. One word for all, Grace, Mr. Reynolds is as dear to me as a brother, and I request you to treat him with proper respect.'

'I am sure, madam, I am polite to every one, even to the artists and authors who call to see you,' replied Grace. 'O, how I wish I was a great actress!'

'Indeed!—you envy me?' asked Cora.

'Not with a bad envy,' replied Grace; 'but when you are kind enough to let me go in front, and I see you act, and hear the audience applaud, I could cry with—with admiration.'

'Yes,' said Cora, looking at herself in the glass, 'there are times when an actress is to be envied; when by her individual power she holds in thrall the minds of hundreds, and makes them for a time real partakers in her mimic joys or sorrows. It is a great reward to know that her art often cheats the sorrowing of their cares, and lightens the burthen of the heavy-laden.'

'O madam, pray go on ma'am!' said

Grace; 'it's quite like being at the theatre.'

Grace's observation reminded Cora that she was acting a little in private; and so, with a slight tinge of a blush on her cheek, she said,

'Those are her triumphs, Grace; somewhat dearly purchased by the ill-construction which generally follows her from the stage-door. Take away my things.'

Cora went to the window and looked out. It was charming weather—cold and dry, the air quite exhilarating. 'That's right, old fellows,' she thought, as two men met in the street; 'shake each other again by the hand, as though you really meant the good wishes you are uttering. There's a bunch of holly and a bough of mistletoe! Well, if a kiss is had beneath it for every berry upon it, there will be a merry Christmas somewhere.'

But a private cab stopping at the door set Cora's heart beating wildly, and drove all other thoughts out of her head but one—and that was of Henry Charleston, who, seeing her at the window, could not refrain kissing his hand to her, despite the publicity of the street.

When he entered the drawing-room where she was, Cora ran to him and embraced him silently for a few moments before she could speak, and then she could only say, 'Dear Henry!'

A few earnest words—and perhaps something more—passed between them, and then they sat down beside each other on the sofa.

'Been shopping, I see,' said Charleston, pointing to the odds and ends on the table, which Grace had not removed.

'O dear, no; those are all from my admirers and your rivals,' replied Cora, laughing.

'Like their impudence to admire you,' said Charleston, smiling gravely.

'Who set them the bad example but you, Mr. Henry Charleston?—and who but you can free me from their intrusion?' answered Cora.

'Now! now! now!' said Charleston, holding up his finger.

'There! there! I won't say another word on the subject,' replied Cora, imitating the action; 'so tell me all about the Bulls and the Bears and the Lane Ducks in that wonderful menagerie of yours in Capel Court; and, by-the-by, you have not said what you wish to-morrow for dinner.'

'To-morrow?—to-morrow is Christmas Day.'

'Of course it is; I know that. What

shall we have?—a turkey, of course?' asked Cora.

'My dear girl, to-morrow is Christmas Day; and it will be impossible for me to dine with you,' replied Charleston.

'What, Henry?'

'My sister and my mother have never dined without me—'

'Your sister and your mother!—am I never to be considered?' said Cora, angrily, walking to the window.

'My sister is the kindest and dearest one man ever had; and you will say so some day,' replied Charleston.

'Some day! I have waited for its dawn some time, Henry,' said Cora, seating herself at the table.

'Have I not described my mother's character often to you, dearest? Reared with the narrow prejudices of a city wife of fifty years ago, she looks upon the stage and its professors with—'

'Contempt,' said Cora. 'Is it right that you—you encourage her in such a feeling?'

'I fear she is too old to change, Cora,' replied Charleston; 'I say, I fear, not that I despair of removing her prejudice. But she would possibly leave me a comparative beggar did she know—I mean, did she suspect—'

'That I had claims upon you equal to her own?' said Cora, quietly. 'I request that you recognize them by dining here to-morrow. Write at once.'

'Cora, you do not know my mother,' replied Charleston. 'She is proud of her position; used to obedience; and I and my sister are to her the same little children who obeyed her commands twenty years ago. I must dine with her.'

'No—I beg of you—pray to you not to refuse me,' said Cora, with a strange earnestness. 'You have professed to love me—I have believed you—do believe so now. You will stay—I wish it—call it a caprice—what you will, but stay! You will? won't you?'

'You cannot doubt my love,' replied Charleston; 'but you are unreasonable.'

'Unreasonable! Look here!' said Cora, pointing to the things upon the table; 'any man thinks he has a right to—believe me what he will—to intrude upon my privacy—to write any fulsome lies he pleases, because I have not concealed my love for you. Henry, I now insist on what I just now prayed for.'

'Insist!'

'Yes! If you pass that door without a promise to return to-morrow, I will never see you more!' exclaimed Cora.

'Are you mad?' asked Charleston.

'Will you come? say yes or no.'

'Cora, all I have is yours, but—my mother—I obey her.'

'Then go—go at once,' said Cora, stamping her pretty foot upon the ground.

Charleston regarded her for a moment, and then, covering his face with his hands, left the room.

Cora's anger was roused, and the spoiled beauty paced up and down the room for some minutes.

'But for the promise which I have given him, I would present myself to-morrow and demand a seat at his mother's table,' said Cora, aloud.

Without having any definite object in doing so, she rung the bell, and Grace, after a second summons, appeared, partly dressed to go abroad.

'What's this mean? Going out?' asked Cora, surprised.

'Yes, madam!' answered Grace, 'as you were kind enough to give me permission to go home this afternoon and remain until the day after to-morrow.'

'You can't go!' said Cora.

'O madam! we always dine at home on Christmas Day.'

'Ah! you have a home! This with all its glitter is not a home—it is a prison! You shall visit your friends some other day; to-morrow, you stay with me.'

'O madam!'

'What! refuse me—refuse what a hundred people covet?' asked Cora, red with anger.

'Not to-morrow—please, madam, I would not offend you,' said Grace.

'But you do—you cannot go!' exclaimed Cora, more angrily.

'Then I am very sorry, but I—you force me to say it—I must go ma'am,' said Grace, firmly.

'Then leave the room, go!' exclaimed Cora, as though the footlights burned before her.

'But I may return?' asked Grace, with tears in her eyes.

'No! I dismiss you now—ungrateful woman, whom I took from charity,' said the angry Cora.

'O madam, consider one minute.'

'Must I ring for some one to show you from the room?'

Poor Grace left the room wondering what had come to her mistress, who, though petulant and whimsical at times, had never yet proved so utterly unkind and unreasonable.

It was some time before Cora's anger subsided, and then came 'the sweet relief of tears,' and she grew calm.

She had hardly recovered her usual equanimity when the door opened, and

her old friend Reynolds—as was his wont—came in unannounced, bringing with him the portrait of Mrs. Melville, which he had taken home to varnish, and repair some damage it had sustained.

'Good-day, Cora,' he said. 'I have brought home the portrait of your mother at last, restored by the pencil of friendship. — Hallo! you are crying!'

'No, no!' answered Cora, but her eyes instantly filled again with tears.

'But I say—yes, yes. What is the matter?'

'Really nothing,' replied Cora.

'People rarely cry for nothing, and you especially,' said Reynolds. 'Come, let me know all. The mouse once saved the lion, and the poor painter may help the rich actress.'

'I am not rich, Reuben, and I don't need help,' replied Cora, hardly knowing what she said.

'Yes you do, and I have always had the honour of assisting you in difficulties. I must rub up your memory a little. Do you remember only a few years ago, when the poor little milliner, and poorer, perhaps, painter, used to club their little earnings together to enable them to keep house? You used to find fault with my noses and eyes, and gorgeous waistcoats, and I found fault with your pothooks and hangers, and made you study hard, little thinking I was educating a great actress.'

'My dear old friend,' said Cora, taking both his hands, and he kissing her forehead.

'Now won't you tell me?' asked Reynolds.

'I am almost ashamed—but I am miserable,' answered Cora.

'I knew you were!' said Reynolds.

'To-day I have received all kinds of flattering notes, and gifts, and yet the only man I loved, or ever can love, refused—'

'What?'

'I am ashamed to say—you'll laugh at me.'

'Well, perhaps that will do us both good,' said Reynolds.

'Then he allows me to dine alone to-morrow—there!'

'I don't laugh, my poor girl,' said, Reynolds, very kindly. 'I understand. You sha'n't dine alone—you shall dine with me. Mild dinner, but a hearty welcome. My father and mother have come to see me,' said Reynolds.

'But shall I not—shall I not embarrass them?' asked Cora.

'Not in the least,' replied Reynolds; 'we'll do a little acting. I will intro-

duce you as the young woman who keeps my rooms in order. You can borrow a cotton dress of your maid, and the thing is done.'

'Capital!' said Cora. 'I shall so enjoy it, I assure you.'

Cora rang the bell, but as no one answered it after some minutes, Reynolds said,

'Your maid does not hurry herself.'

'Ah! I'd forgotten,' replied Cora, blushing; 'I have been out of temper this morning, and dismissed her.'

'Then you were wrong, I'll be bound,' said Reynolds.

Grace had not left the house, however, and hearing 'the old familiar bell,' she dried her swollen eyes and came into the room. Cora went to her old servant, and took her hand.

'Grace, you must think no more of what I said just now. Go to your friends. I did not ring to tell you this. I have changed my mind; but go and spend a happy Christmas Day.'

'Why, you've not asked her for a dress,' said Reynolds. 'My old people, you know, are of what they call a "serious turn," and don't think very favourably of your craft, Cora. You must keep your profession to yourself—in fact, drop the shop, you know.'

'And you really intend to call for me to-morrow?' asked Cora.

'Of course I do.'

'Thanks, dear old friend,' replied Cora, taking his hand again; 'you have proved to me that I am not so forsaken as I thought myself to be. I am an actress, a stage-player, and the prejudices of your parents must be respected by me equally with those of the mother of Henry Charleston. Good-bye my friend—my brother.' It was her turn to kiss his forehead now.

'Cora, you are right. I only thought of your pleasure, you thought of my duty,' said Reynolds.

'Do not praise me, dear friend; I have been wrong more than once to-day. I have wronged one who loves me, and who had many reasons to regard the happiness of those from whom I would have estranged him. I shall dine alone——'

When she had said this, she gave a sharp scream, and no wonder, for the arms of Mr. Henry Charleston were around her, and his warm lips upon her cheek.

'Not alone, dear Cora, not alone!' said that rude gentleman. 'My dear good sister has told the secret of our marriage to my mother, and her love

has overcome her prejudice, and we dine with her.'

'Hurrah!' cried Reynolds; 'that's a weight off my mind; for ever since I gave her away, I felt I had committed some enormity, though for the life of me I couldn't make out where was the sin.'

'La! ma'am!' said Grace; 'you married, and me not know on it!'

'Yes, Grace, I have been so courageous,' replied Cora, blushing. 'Now give me that poor old box which you have so much despised. There's the key; open it, and look at the paper you'll find there.'

Grace did as she was ordered, and having opened a small slip of paper read what was thereon inscribed.

'Well I never!' exclaimed Grace. 'Why, if it isn't your marriage lines, ma'am!'

'I told you how precious were its contents to me,' said Cora, looking up fondly into her husband's face.

Mr. Henry Charleston, although there was company present, threw his arms around his beautiful wife, and kissed her three or four times very audibly.*

Old Mrs. Charleston received her daughter-in-law very stiffly at first, but after a time, when she had looked long at Cora's beautiful face, and listened to the music of Cora's voice, and seen her darling disobedient son Henry lay Cora's head upon his bosom as though he could not hold it close enough, the stout old lady burst into a flood of tears, and stretched out her arms to embrace Cora also.

When the manager called at St. John's Wood during the Christmas week to see Miss Melville, he was referred to Cadogan Place, and told to inquire for Mrs. Henry Charleston.

Cora's engagement had only a month to run, and as the pantomime had proved a great success, the manager consented to cancel her obligation to him, and relieve his treasury from the payment of Miss Melville's salary.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Charleston resolved not to be cheated out of their honeymoon, and so they and Mr. Reuben Reynolds went down to see the Morgans, and made them happier than they had been for years—not by the hampers and gifts left behind, but by the knowledge of the happiness which had come about the one-time angel of *THE SMALL HOUSE OVER THE WATER*.

* The latter part of this story is a reminiscence of the French stage.—M. L.

SIR GUY'S GOBLET.

BY ANNIE THOMAS,

AUTHOR OF 'DENIS DUNNE,' 'WALTER GORING,' 'PLAYED OUT,' ETC.

IT was the second or third day of December when the postman, after a long period of total abstinence from double-knocking at our door, fell away into moderation, and left us a couple of letters.

We were living alone together, my brother's widow and I, and our interests, and consequently our correspondents, were not numerous. She was my senior by—no matter how many years, but quite enough to render the arrangement a perfectly proper one, even according to the most severe conventional code, although I was unmarried, and still called a girl by verbally well-disposed friends.

My brother had been dead about eighteen months. He had died worn out, broken down, used up—these are several phrases descriptive of the same thing. In plain English, he had 'gone to his death' in the columns of a daily paper—gone to it as unflinchingly, as heroically, as cheerfully as any one of that gallant band who made the never-to-be-too-frequently-quoted charge at Balacava. But he belonged to a noble army of martyrs whose deeds do not get recorded by laureates; so when he fell down in fighting the hard fight of the daily press, the ranks closed, and nobody missed him—nobody, at least, save his wife and his sister. Very few people seem to be missed when they fall out of their places, however it may be in reality.

It is a fact, and therefore, in the face of all precedent, I will state it, but there had never existed a grain of anything save the kindest feeling between my sister-in-law and myself. She had never feared 'my interference.' I had never accused her even in my heart of attempting to alienate Guy's affections from me. The result of this abnegation of the time-honoured rights of sisters-in-law was, that while Guy lived we all carried on the war merrily and happily; and when Guy died, we decided that it would be very hard for the two who were left to part. She was alone in the world, and I was virtually, though not nominally, alone too. There was an uncle of my mother's alive, to be sure; but he was like my father's crest to me, merely a badge of respectability—nothing more, to be mentioned in a modulated voice even to myself—a baronet—Sir Guy Pomfret. My mother had

felt that she was taking almost a liberty in naming her only son after the mighty head of her house. But she had done it, and even dared to apprise him of it—which act of fealty Sir Guy rewarded by sending my brother a little morocco box containing a small embossed silver mug—'goblet' he called it in his letter; but as it was not capable of containing half-a-pint of anything, we declined using the more pretentious appellation in familiar converse, and it came to be known in the household as 'Guy's Mug.'

Of course we were sitting at our breakfast-table when these two letters arrived. Everybody is sitting at breakfast when letters arrive, in fiction. We were discussing our probable chances of passing a remarkably dreary Christmas, when the girl who served us in our uncomfortable lodgings came in with our letters, which we seized with the eagerness people who have not received a written word for weeks only can feel.

Mine was the shorter, and so was read the sooner of the two; but, short as it was, it was very staggering. It was dated from 'The Towers, —shire,' and was to the following effect:—

'MY DEAR MISS DUNBAR (I was the dear Miss Dunbar),—My father and I were speaking yesterday of a regret we often feel; that we did not see more of your dear mother while she was alive. This misfortune is, however, not to be remedied now'—('hardly,' I thought)—'but we at least may know each other. We expect a few friends down at Christmas: you must come to us then, as we very much wish to make your acquaintance. Come down on the 23rd, if you can conveniently, by the 11 A.M. train: you will be met at the Playford station. We were extremely sorry to hear of your brother's death. I send this under cover to his lawyer, who is most likely in possession of your address.

'My father desires his kind regards, and joins with me in hoping that we shall soon see you.

'In the meantime believe me to be,

'Your affectionate cousin,

'RACHAEL POMFRET.'

The reader will agree with me that this letter from 'my affectionate cousin, Rachael Pomfret,' an utter stranger even by name to me, must have been

very staggering. It was some minutes before I could realize that it was not a bit of an absurd dream. But by the time my sister had read her letter I had accepted mine as a fact, and knew that I was broad awake.

'Helen,' I began, as she put her letter back into its envelope, 'here's an invitation to the Towers.'

'And who are the Towers?' Helen asked. We were such strangers to my mother's kin, that my brother had scarcely even named them to his wife.

'It's the Pomfrets,' I replied, and then I gave her the letter.

'Oh, Guy's mug,' she said, half smiling, as she stretched out her hand for it. Then she read it quickly, and said, 'Well, dear—you'll go?'

I had watched her as she read, and I had marked the flush that spread over her sweet, serious face, as she came to the careless, cold mention of the death of the one who had been everything to her.

'You will go?' she repeated, as she gave it back to me. 'It may be such a good thing for you, Georgie. You will go?'

Now I was young, and I sighed for a change from the dull routine of the life I had led for what seemed so long a time. This promised to be such a pleasant change. My ideas of country-house Christmas festivities were chiefly gained from 'Pickwick.' I pictured the Towers as a sort of revised and improved 'Manor Farm.' Sir Guy already loomed before me—a slightly refined old Wardle; and in the writer of the note I have transcribed I half hoped to find a 'maiden aunt,' amenable to the advances of some unknown Tracy Tupman. The prospect was a very seductive one to me; but that cold mention of my brother, together with no mention at all being made of his wife, weighed the balance against going down very heavily. So I shook my head with a great air of determination, and said, 'No, I shouldn't think of it.'

Helen rested her elbow on the table, and put her cheek on her hand, and looked at me inquiringly. I returned her steady gaze, partly because I wanted her to see that I meant what I said, and partly because she was so pleasant to look at.

She was such a pretty woman this widow of my brother—such a gentle, Madonna-faced woman—with her small, egg-shaped face, her deep blue eyes, and her shining smooth dark-brown hair. She had a sweet voice, and a sweet smile too—a smile that crept over her lips, not like a ray of sunlight, but

like a pure moonbeam. Yet it was not a cold or unmeaning smile at all; on the contrary, it said more than any other smile I have ever seen. She smiled now when my steady gaze began to relax a little, and the silent lips said so sweetly and well, 'You will go?' that I answered the mute appeal by saying—

'Do you really think I had better, Helen?'

She nodded and laughed.

'Yes, really, for several reasons; one is, that you are too young and too pretty to drift about the world by yourself, and when once the Pomfrets see you, they will awake to that fact; for you're like my Guy, Georgie, you get liked directly.'

'Well, that's one reason—a very flattering way you have worded it, too; but that's not enough; you said there were several; give me another.'

'Here is another,' she said, giving me her letter and getting up from the table as she spoke. 'I haven't consulted you, Georgie dear, because it's no use consulting any one about a step that you feel sure you'll have to take whatever may be said against it.' She walked away to the window as she finished speaking, and stood there looking out, while I read a rather long letter from a lady in Hertfordshire, who, after making out a portentous list of requirements, agreed to accept Mrs. Dunbar's services as a resident governess, if she (Helen) could conscientiously declare that she came up to them (the requirements).

'Why have you done this?' I asked, hastily getting up and going over to her.

'Because I was obliged to do it, Georgie,' she answered, without turning her head; 'and I feared that you would be obliged to follow my example. Poor Guy! how miserable he would have been if he had ever thought that was before his pet sister.' She put her hand fondly on my arm then, and I saw there were tears in her eyes.

'Oh Nellie! he'd have been ten times more miserable to think it was before you,' I said, kissing her; and then she told me more about our circumstances, and I realized that this move of hers, miserable as it was to contemplate, was also necessary.

'I will set about getting a situation, too, at once,' I said firmly.

'No you will not,' she replied; 'not till you return from your visit to the Towers. I am not going to this Mrs. Weston till the holidays are over, so I shall be here to help you when you come back from the Pomfrets; go there you

shall, I'm determined; you ought to know them.'

So it was settled that I should go to my relations, and then such an ignominious difficulty arose! I had been in mourning so long, that my coloured dresses were all hopelessly, unalterably old-fashioned, and my black was meagre and shabby. Even Helen shook her head over this obstacle. But at last she said—

'You must go, and you must look nice, Georgie; will you agree to leave it all to me, and to ask no questions?'

I began protesting, but she stopped me by saying—

'Of course you will; why did I ask you, when you have always been the best girl in the world to me? Before we go any further, though, what is it you most want?'

I modestly mentioned at least a dozen articles. Amongst others a hat. I could not go into the country without a hat.

Helen was jotting things down in her note-book. 'A hat naturally—the travelling dress shall be one of your strong points, Georgie, because of first impressions, you know. Now leave it all to me, and when you come back you shall help to get me ready for Mrs. Weston.'

I was very much puzzled a few hours after this by seeing Helen get out of a cab at the door, and wait while the servant plunged half of her person into the vehicle several times, emerging after each plunge with a parcel. I knew that Mrs. Guy had a horror of debt. I also knew that Mrs. Guy had very little spare money. But I had been told to ask no questions, so I examined the contents of the parcels in grateful and admiring silence.

By the 23rd my wardrobe was quite ready. True, it was not extensive, but in my eyes it was very perfect. Helen's taste was too true for one thing to fight with another, whatever the scale. There was nothing to find fault with in the grey travelling dress and jacket braided with black, and in the small black hat with a ptarmigan's wing in it, in which I went down to Playford. 'Mind you make a good impression on them,' Mrs. Guy said, when she kissed me at parting; and I coloured all over my face in my girlish vanity, and felt that it was not impossible that I might do so. I know I think plenty of chestnut hair and grey eyes pretty on other people, and my poor mother used to say that I had the 'real Dunbar figure,' which was considered wonderfully willowy and good, but none of the fair Dunbars—not even dear Guy, who was so like me

—had my terribly black lashes and eyebrows.

Miss Pomfret had not told me when the train reached Playford, and I had forgotten to look at a railway bill, and there was no one in the carriage with whom I dared to enter into conversation. My fellow-travellers all looked 'good style,' but they did not look 'good-natured.' Stay! I wrong one of them by saying this.

The exception was a fine, fair, distinguished-looking young man—one scarcely saw that he was handsome at first—of about eight or nine-and-twenty. He had jumped into the carriage immediately after me, and he now sat just opposite to me, with an opossum rug over his knees, and the last number of 'Punch' in his hand. When he had looked through that, he folded his arms and looked through the window, and I saw that his profile and expression were both fine and high-bred. 'Some young lord of the manor going down to spend his Christmas at his ancestral halls,' I thought, romantically. And I went on to wonder if he would not be rather desolate in those halls if he were not married, and to speculate as to whether he was a neighbour of Sir Guy Pomfret's or not?

My speculations on the point deepened in interest, when about four o'clock we ran into the Playford station, and he got out and looked up and down the platform. A servant in livery ran up at once, touching his hat, and respectfully smiling a welcome. 'Here you are, sir,' he said. 'Master has sent the stanhope, thinking you'd like to drive the Don at once.'

'That's right, Green,' my handsome fellow-traveller answered, in one of those strong, sonorous voices that seem to tell of the power within. 'Are they all well at home?' he added; and the man replied—

'Yes, sir; thank you, sir; all well.'

I had been standing looking on and listening all this time (it was only a minute or two, but it seemed a long time to me, since no one came forward to make me welcome); but at this point I was recalled to a sense of my position by a porter coming up and asking—

'Do you want your box carried anywhere, miss?'

'I think it will be sent for,' I stammered out hastily. Then as the gentleman and his servant walked away, I added, 'I am going to the Towers—Sir Guy Pomfret's.'

'This way then, miss,' the man replied, shouldering my box; and I followed him down the station out into the

yard, where a tiny waggonette and a New Forest pony were drawn up. A groom in stable dress stood by the pony's head, and as I came up he asked if I was Miss Dunbar.

On my replying that I was, he said, 'Miss Pomfret had sent her own pony for me, and would I like to drive?'

'No, thank you,' I answered; and then I got in, and the groom took the reins and the driving-seat, and we made our way out of the yard.

Out of the quiet station-yard, and into the midst of a brilliantly-animated scene. In the middle of the broad country road, well kept and amber-hued as that of a park, a stanhope, between the shafts of which was a magnificently-made dark-brown horse, was pulled up. The driver—my distinguished-looking fellow-traveller—was in the act of taking off his hat to a young lady who was just checking a pair of ponies abreast of him.

A lovely young lady, with a wild blush-rose complexion, and masses of fair hair billowing out from beneath her small cavalier hat. As she sat a little back, drawing up her fine-mouthed little steeds, I thought that I had never seen anything so glittering and pretty in my life. Her flashing blue eyes, her face dimpling with smiles, the perfect ease with which she held the reins and restrained the fiery little creatures that were drawing her shell-like phaeton, the sheen of the black velvet and the soft grey tone about the grebe in which she was clothed—all made up a picture that it is impossible to forget, as it was fair to look upon.

Broad as the road was, there was scarcely room for the waggonette to pass the two other carriages, and the lady I have described did not turn her eyes in our direction. So we drew up and waited.

'What do you think of grandpapa's last present?' the lady was saying as we came out. 'I wanted him to wait for you to choose the ponies, but he would not.'

'They are handsome enough,' the gentleman replied. 'You all look very well together. "Behold the chariot of the Fairy Queen," was the quotation that rose to my lips when I first caught sight of you.'

'How absurd you are, Guy,' she replied. ('Guy! What a thoroughly county name Guy must be,' I thought.) 'How absurd you are, Guy; now give me room to pass, and let me get on, or I shall have such a little drive to-day, in consequence of my ill-luck in meeting you.'

She looked through her long lashes with a half-childish half-demure smile. No man could have imagined for one instant that she meant seriously that she considered that meeting a piece of ill-luck. But he looked grave at once, and made more room for her to pass, as if there had not been plenty of room already.

She gave her ponies a sharp flick, and as they sprang forward she called out—

'Good-bye—till dinner,' and the picture was broken up.

I felt so sorry for it—so very sorry that those two handsome young people had vanished before I knew anything about them. As we drove slowly along—for Miss Pomfret's pony was very fat, and by no means fast—I made up little stories, of which the Fairy Queen and the one who had bestowed the title upon her were the hero and heroine. 'We shall meet at dinner,' she had said. I saw it all. She was the 'lady of the land,' and had an entertainment that night, to which he with the long yellow moustache and blue eyes had come expressly from town. I think at this juncture I looked down distastefully at my plain grey dress trimmed with black braid. The beauty of black velvet and lustrous grebe was very much before me. Ere the feeling became dissatisfaction we reached the Towers, and drove up between tall iron gates through a paved court-yard, bordered with grand old oaks and cedars, to the entrance door of the Pomfrets' family mansion.

I saw at once that it was not a bit like the 'Manor Farm' in 'Pickwick.' What it was like I shall attempt to tell you.

It was a very wide house of red brick, with that time-honoured tint on it that only houses that have centuries full of traditions hanging over them can hope to have. There was a deep fosse in front of the house, and this was filled in with luxuriantly-grown laurels and other evergreens, whose brightly-polished leaves broke the straight line of the bottoms of all the lower windows. To the right other large iron gates gave access to a broad lawn, encircled with higher shrubs. To the left a wide flight of steps led away to the gardens. The stables and other offices were in the rear of the house, between it and a hill that was crowned with a couple of ruined towers, the fragments of what had been the abode of the family when the Norman king gave the estate to the first Pomfret, the founder of the race. There was an American garden, and a lake, and the loveliest winding, tumbling,

turbulent stream meandering through the grounds that was ever seen. But all these things I knew afterwards. All I could see now was that the house was stately-looking, but full of bright life apparently; for from every window there streamed a flood of light, and voices full of warm, hearty tones, were borne out into the coldness of the December air.

It was all so much more grand than I had expected, that I felt terribly nervous about walking in through that ponderous door, and facing the Pomfrets alone. But it had to be done; so I did it without a sign of the hesitation I felt. I know now that the entrance-hall is furnished more like a banqueting hall, with its buffets and huge tankards of silver and gold (rather different these to poor Guy's mug)—its big leathern couches and capacious chairs—its grandly-pannelled oak walls, hung with shields, and adorned at regular intervals with life-size figures of men in armour—and its floor luxuriously carpeted with Persian rugs, and tiger, and bear, and deer skins. I know all this now—as I know myself, or better perhaps; but it was all lost upon me then, as I hovered somewhere in the rear of the big Swiss who acted as porter, who went on and announced me to some one, who forthwith came out from a room and made me welcome.

This some one was a kindly-looking, small, slightly deformed lady, who came up and kissed me, saying—

'Good gracious! can you be Georgina's daughter? My dear child, you're as old as she was when I saw her last.' Then she bustled about a little, rang a bell, and finally sent me to my room, under the care of her own maid, Percival.

Before any of my fears and shortcomings can be accepted by the reader as natural, it must be fully understood that, though I was a town-bred girl, I had seen nothing of 'society.' I had lived a Bohemian life with my brother till he married, and after his marriage I had lived in absolute quiet with his wife; so now I had not a single precedent to go upon at the Towers—nothing but my womanly instincts, and I feared that these might prove insufficient.

For example, I felt abject before Percival, as she, after having had my box unstrapped by a subordinate, proceeded to unpack it. I knew what it contained, and knew what she would think of what it contained, and wished I hadn't come to the Towers, in a breath. Then I wished she would speak to me; and then I remembered that it was not her part to volunteer speech. And then I looked in the cheval glass, and saw my-

self reflected at full length, and wished, askingly, that I was not so much more substantial-looking than that brilliant apparition in velvet and grebe who had met the other brilliant apparition at the station.

Presently some tea in a grayish-white cup and some shavings of bread and butter were brought to me—a deep, fat arm-chair having been previously wheeled round to the fire, and a table placed beside it, by Percival. Then that oppressive person announced her intention of leaving me for an hour, till it was time to come back and dress for dinner, and I was left alone.

Alone at last!—and how very small I felt, to be sure, in that lofty room, whose corners were lost in shade for all the wax candles that were lavishly burning themselves away for my enlightenment on the mantelpiece and dressing-table. What a mantelpiece it was, too!—carved into a hundred quaint conceits and flowery fancies, in such rich-looking dark oak. As I sat there, tired, and warm, and excited, I began to make out stories for the many ladies of the house of Pomfret who must have sat where I was sitting now, and warmed themselves in other days.

Those other days—ah! how the romance of them grew upon and bewildered me as I sat lost in the depths of the arm-chair, looking round at the dressing-table, that was so different to anything I had ever seen before—out of Wardour Street. No muslin covered its big carved oak legs—no little delicate fanciful arrangements of quilled ribbon and fluted lace ran round its border. It stood uncovered in its dark, hard beauty; for I know it to have possessed that latter attribute, now that I am aware that Gibbons' imagination and hand both worked upon it. What a massive silver-framed old glass it was that stood upon it!—an unbecoming old glass, too, I remember, for all its grandeur—a glass that made me look green when I stood before it, and that threw my nose into a queer line that feature never had from nature.

For I had to rouse myself from my deep, dreamy fancies, and stand to be dressed before that old glass at last. Percival came back, and I gathered my disordered mind together under her auspices, and sat myself down before my stately toilet-altar to be dressed for my first Christmas evening in a country house.

I felt very much depressed when, the foundation of fine starched skirts and silk slips laid, Percival the terrible, the only maid I had ever had to wait upon

me, brought out my prize dress—a fleecy thing, all cloudy white tulle and puffiness, that Helen had taken special pains with. This had been designed as a sort of crowning glory—a thing in which to appear at some great county ball—a robe in which to be seen by the ‘Prince Charming’ who was to be seen and conquered by me during my visit. And now Percival took it out for me to go down to dinner in. I spoke at last, suggesting mildly that ‘there was no company, was there?’

‘Only the company staying in the house—about twenty,’ Percival replied, standing before me like a respectable Fate, with the tulle dress gathered up over her arm.

‘Then I will wear black silk,’ I contrived to say, firmly. So at last I got dressed in that, with a great white gauze cloud over me called a scarf. And then my hour was come, and I went down as well as I could to the Pomfrets’ drawing-room.

I shall never forget the desire I had to say, ‘Please, don’t!’ when the before-mentioned gorgeous Swiss threw open the drawing-room door, and announced ‘Miss Dunbar.’ A shiver possessed me from head to foot, and something went wrong with a vein in the back of my head—and the walls wriggled—and the floor surged—and the ceiling came swooping down!—and I found myself erect after it all, and shaking hands with an old gentleman, who was thin and grey, and had a very hooked nose.

He was my great uncle, Sir Guy Pomfret. He did not say much to me, but what he did say was kindly meant and so kindly expressed. I found myself sitting down after a minute, looking up at him as he stood before me, questioning me as to my journey; and then I found myself answering him coherently enough, though a shy glance which I had given to the left nearly made my brain reel again.

There were several people in the room, but it was large, and they stood in detached groups, and so did not strike the eye at once. At first when I came in I was only conscious of light and size. But by the time I had sat down and answered Sir Guy’s questions I was capable of distinguishing forms. The little deformed lady was doing the honours vivaciously I gathered, and then to my left were a couple that I started forward to look more fully at—the Fairy Queen and my handsome fellow-traveller!

What a fairy queen she looked now, to be sure! She absolutely glittered in her fair beauty and her crystalline white

silk. She was playing with a big, white-feathered fan, and a bouquet of Christmas roses, and a scent-bottle, and a glove that was half on and half off, as I looked at her. And he stood opposite to her, glancing admiringly at all her coquettish efforts, smiling half cynically the while—a perfect type of the tawny-bearded, blue-eyed, well-grown young Englishman, looking, in his severe black and narrow tape-like tie, not a bit like a mute or a waiter (*vide* the comic writers), but thoroughbred as he was—the result of race and good society.

He was brought up to me soon, and introduced by the sprightly, deformed lady (who was, I found, the same Rachael Pomfret who had written to me) as ‘your cousin Georgie—I shall drop the “Miss Dunbar,”—Guy Pomfret.’

Then, as I half rose (not quite knowing what to do, fearing nervously that I should commit some solecism in manners whatever I did), and returned his bow, Miss Pomfret added—

‘And now come across and get known to another cousin, my dear;’ and before I knew what was happening, I was face to face with the Fairy Queen, who held out a slender, white, jewelled hand to me, and laughed and flashed out smiles, and made me feel very material indeed as she made herself momentarily more fascinating, when Miss Rachael had named her as ‘Ida Pomfret.’

I have no very distinct recollection of what went on before dinner or at dinner. I only know I heard my own name repeated several times, and many people came and said kind things to me for my ‘mother’s sake.’ I gladly, gratefully acknowledged that it was for her sake, solely and wholly, that I was a favoured guest in this grand old place.

But after a time my mind seems to have accepted the situation, and cleared and steadied itself, for all the later events of that evening are well outlined in my memory. We had not been back in the drawing-room long before Ida came and sat down by me, and shot off some bright little sentences at me.

‘So I nearly played the part of Jugernaut’s car to you,’ she began. ‘Aunt Rachael meant you to be a surprise to us all, and kept your coming a dead secret. I didn’t in the least know who it was in that horrid little car of hers.’

The Fairy Queen really looked, as she said it, as if it came to her by right divine to drive over such mere mortals as myself. She was lying back in a low chair without any arms to it, and her dress sprang out on either side in great rolling waves of glittering white. Her golden hair stood out in strong relief,

like a glory against the dark background of the velvet chair. Altogether she looked such a dainty creature that it seemed a little thing that she should be regardless of the lives of others.

'You did see me then?' I asked.

'Well, I saw you without seeing you, if you can understand that; I was taken up with showing Guy my new ponies; you never saw him before, did you?'

'Whom?'

'Guy—my cousin—your cousin, too, isn't he? Oh, no, your second cousin, that's it.'

'No, I never saw him before.'

'He's my salvation at Christmas,' the blonde beauty said, with a little yawn; 'he gets up charades. Do you like charades? And we always have a ball or two while he is here.'

'Is this his home, or yours?'

'My home now—his in time to come. I live with grandpapa and aunt Rachael; Guy is the heir.' She dropped her voice to a whisper as she said this, then she raised it again suddenly, to ask, 'Do you like Christmas better in the country than in London?'

'I have never spent a Christmas in the country yet,' I replied.

'Oh, you lucky girl!' she cried; 'and I have never spent one out of it; I'd give anything—except my ponies—to go to town and see all the burlesques; I don't care for the pantomimes; have you seen many?'

'I told her "yes;" while Guy was alive I saw all such things, now I "was sick of them,"' I added, passionately.

'Who was Guy?' she asked, soberly; and she seemed sorry when I told her he was my brother.

But such a bright creature cannot be sorry long for the troubles of others. She was up dancing away towards the piano, in answer to somebody's request that she would sing, before the mist had cleared off my eyes which the mention of Guy had caused. When I could see clearly again, Guy Pomfret, my other cousin, was standing talking to her while she fluttered over some music, and seemed unable to make a choice of a song.

Presently, however, she found one, or he found it for her. At any rate he placed it, and kept his hand ready to turn the page while she sang, and I got drawn up nearer to them by her voice, and watched his face as he watched hers.

She had a ringing, clear, flexible voice. I can express what its sound was by naming a colour more clearly than in any other way—it was a bright blue; it was like a silver bell, as cold and with as much feeling.

She was singing a plaintive, passionate ballad, and she sang it correctly and cleverly; but I felt dissatisfied with the way in which she warbled out those reproachful words—

'You should have told me that before, Jamie,
You should have told me that before, laddie.'

I was glad when Guy Pomfret looked dissatisfied, too, and stopped her before she had finished it quite, by saying, 'You never can do that *mignonne*—try something else.'

She frowned for an instant, and then got up, saying, 'No, no, some one else, and then I will try to do justice to another of your favourites, Guy; it's not for want of desire to please you that I failed this time, sir,' she added, in a low voice, with a little laugh that was slightly tinged with vexation.

I did not hear what his answer was, for at that moment Miss Rachael spoke to me.

'Do you sing, my dear?—will you oblige us?'

'I shall be very happy,' I answered, and then I felt horribly hot and uncomfortable. My voice was a low, rolling, tremulous contralto — what would it sound like after that silver bell!

'Will you like to try some of mine, or will you sing something of your own?' Ida asked, good-naturedly; and then Mr. Pomfret came forward to 'see if he could help me to a selection,' he said, and I knew that I was fairly committed to it; so I said 'I would try what I knew best;' and half-staggered by my own temerity, I sang some verses poor Guy had written and composed once after a visit to the Dunbar side of our family:—

'There's a breath of freedom on the ground,
Where wild the heather grows,
That makes it dearer to my heart,
Than England's emblem rose;
It springs around the thistle,
The stern flower of the north,
It decks the plains of England,
And the bonnets of the Forth.

'Those purple sprigs! no flowers sure,
Blooming in other dells,
Are half so sweet to Scottish hearts,
As Scotland's heather bells.
For on mountain brow, by lowland loch,
Through every kind of weather,
We roamed about, unchecked, unchid,
O'er plains of gorse and heather.

'We still can claim a Scottish name,
And the Scotch blood in us tells,
As here on English ground we roam,
Through Scotland's heather bells.
For the breath of freedom's on the soil,
Where wild the heather grows,
They hold their own most gallantly,
Against the English rose.'

They all thanked me graciously, and said kind things, all save Ida. She leant back still further on the couch she occupied like a throne, and said 'such things were beyond her; it was impossible for her to make an effort to be historical, and understand those allusions to the times of Wallace, she supposed.' She said this to her cousin Guy, and I did feel very grateful to him for not seeming to think it witty, and for making her no answer.

I went to bed that night very tired and very much bewildered, and very much interested in them all. It was so funny that they should be my own people, and still so far from me in all real interest and sympathy. Even while I was accusing them of this in my heart, I was made to feel myself an ingrate by Miss Pomfret coming in to bid me good-night again.

The kind, sprightly old lady stirred the fire to a brighter blaze, and sat herself down in the arm-chair opposite to it.

'I have come to tell you a little about the state of affairs here, my dear,' she began, briskly. 'I must have you know all about us and care all about us. In the first place, you must know that it's a cherished plan of my father's to see Guy and Ida married to each other.

'Is it?' I replied.

'Yes; both my brothers are dead. Ida is the only child of my second brother, Arthur, and Arthur was his father's favourite; in the same way Ida is his favourite grandchild; she has always lived here; he wants her to be mistress of the Towers, and as she can't be unless she marries Guy, why he wants her to marry Guy, you see.'

'And how do they both like the plan?' I asked, beginning to be intensely interested in the romance which had commenced (for me) just outside the railway station.

Miss Pomfret laughed and shook her head. 'Ida likes it well enough, but Guy is inscrutable. The fact is, my dear, I'm not so fond of my niece as I am of my nephew.'

'What a beauty she is!' I exclaimed.

'Yes, she is; and she has never thought of or cared for any one besides her beauty from the moment she knew its power. Guy's a great deal too good for her; but that is not what I came in to say. Have you brought your habit with you?'

'I haven't one,' I confessed, with blushes.

'Can you ride?'

'I used to ride a good deal with Guy in a rough sort of way when we were out for our autumn trips.'

'Ah, well! we'll see about a habit for you; meantime you must wear an old skirt. Ida has planned a ride for tomorrow, meaning to take Guy out by herself. Now I mean you to go too, my dear.' Then the old lady patted me on the cheek, and left me.

Wishing to think well of what was so lovely, I tried hard not to see on the following day that Ida either grudged me the pleasure Miss Pomfret had procured for me, or that she disliked my society. She opened her great starry blue eyes when I came down in the skirt and a half-tight, sealskin jacket, and shrugged her own well-habited shoulders when we walked out to mount our horses, and she saw that a very handsome brown gelding had been prepared for me. Then she turned away, and Guy Pomfret put her up on her own beautiful mare, Guinevre, and when she was mounted, she (Ida) realized Tennyson's description of that peerless queen very well. I thought

'She looked so lovely as she swayed,
The rein with dainty finger tips;
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly hopes for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.'

Then my turn came, and I was horribly afraid lest I might fail to rise like a bird to the saddle as Ida had done, and was proportionately grateful to Mr. Pomfret and Fate when I found myself securely seated without having blundered at all.

'Puck is a charming horse, Miss Dunbar, but he likes to have his own way on the turf,' Mr. Pomfret said, as he settled me. Then he added, good-naturedly, almost in a whisper, 'Don't let him get his head—ride him on the curb.'

'Thanks. I'll attend to your direction,' I replied; and then Mr. Pomfret mounted his own powerful hunter, and we started.

Though it was mid-winter—Christmas Eve in fact—there was no crispness in the air and no frost on the ground. The roads were muddy and heavy, and the atmosphere mild and humid. We rode slowly for three or four miles along the highway, and then Ida proposed that we should go on some downs that bordered the road, and 'have a sharp canter in a sharper air.'

'Remember,' Mr. Guy Pomfret muttered, as we took the turf, and I nodded assent, and drew my curb-rein a trifle tighter.

Puck went along over the billowing downs in a grand charging canter for

about a couple of hundred yards. Then Ida Pomfret's mare flashed past us, the rider sitting erect and fair, her horse evidently well in hand, though it was going at racing speed. As she bounded ahead, Puck did something extraordinary with all his legs at once (Guy told me afterwards that he 'bucked'), threw up his head, then lowered it suddenly with a jerk, and then went off in the wake of the mare at a pace that stretched him out flat nearly, and made my brain whirl.

I do not think that I was terrified, though I was well aware that I had no more control over Puck than I had over destiny. I was dimly conscious of Ida branching off to the right, while I was borne straight on towards what looked like a wall of blue sky. Another moment and I knew that I was nearing the brow of a steep hill. Another and other hoofs than Puck's sounded in my ears close behind me—then something rose with a crashing noise, and crushed against me—a sharp pain smote through my chest—a roar sounded in my ears—horses seemed to be about and around me on every side, and it was all darkness.

When it came light again—that is, when I opened my eyes—I found myself lying on a green mound half way down the slope of a steep hill, with my head resting on Guy Pomfret's arm, and Puck standing close by, looking brightly unconscious of having done anything wrong. 'What did I do?' I asked, and Guy replied, 'Came an awful cropper with Puck in galloping down a slope; but you're not hurt—tell me?—you're not hurt?'

I roused myself then, and found that my foot was in pain and turned the wrong way—my ankle was sprained, in fact. But how about Puck? I was much more anxious about the handsome, brilliant-looking little brown horse than about myself.

'Puck is all right,' Mr. Pomfret said.

'And where is she?'

'Ida?'

'Yes.'

'Here she comes,' he replied gravely, as Miss Ida made her appearance round a knoll. 'I sent her to find a boy to come and take Puck back.'

Miss Ida Pomfret came up and leant forward gracefully on her pommel, still sitting well back in the saddle, to speak to me. 'I hope you're not hurt; but I never saw such rash riding in my life, Miss Dunbar.'

'Nor did I; but it was not Miss Dunbar's,' Mr. Pomfret replied; and I said—

'I really think it was you started Puck.' I said it most innocently, and saw with surprise that she coloured like fire.

'I suppose you will have nerve enough to ride home, if this boy leads Puck?'—she asked; and I said—

'Oh, yes;' but Mr. Pomfret shook his head.

'Miss Dunbar has sprained her ankle, Ida.'

'Then how is she to get home?' Ida asked, 'if you won't let her ride; she can't walk.'

'You will see how she is to get home,' he answered, picking me up in his arms, as he spoke. Then he mounted his own horse, holding me easily the while; and I submitted passively through sheer amazement.

'Really, Guy!' Miss Ida exclaimed indignantly, 'do you think I am going to make one of such a procession?'

'That you'll please yourself about,' he replied coolly; then he told the boy to lead Puck home carefully, and started up the hill at a slow pace.

I was half faint with the pain, and presently he saw that I was, I suppose, for he said—

'The sooner I get you home the better, for your ankle, Miss Dunbar. This old fellow's gallop is like a rocking chair; tell me if you can bear it?'

'He slackened the reins, and the horse went off like an arrow at once.'

'Yes, I can bear this,' I murmured, as he grasped me more firmly, and Guy Pomfret said—

'That's right—that's plucky,' and then sang—

'Grant liebschen auch? Der mond scheinehell.

Hurrah! die Todten reiten schnell

Grant liebschen auch vor Todten?'

'Say more of "Lenora" I roused myself to utter, as he paused; but he merely repeated the three lines he had already sung, and promised to read me the whole of the marvellous ballad that same afternoon.

I heard Mr. Pomfret tell his aunt when we reached home that 'Ida had started off in the way that she knew Puck would never stand, and that Miss Dunbar managed him cleverly till he went down with her.' And I saw Miss Rachael and her nephew exchange queer little sympathetic glances; but I did not know what they meant.

I think that I was almost glad that my ankle was sprained. It was well worth enduring all the pain I did endure, to be made so much of by the two people I liked best at the Towers. Sir

Guy came and looked at me as I was stretched out on a couch in Miss Rachael's boudoir (she would not have me imprisoned in my bedroom, she said); looked at me through his eyeglass, and remarked 'it was a pity; but still fortunate that I was not disfigured at all.' But Miss Pomfret and her nephew stayed with me, and did all they could to amuse me; she making little well-meaning readjustments of the pillows at brief intervals: he reading me 'Lenora,' and uttering well-adjusted phrases relative to the poem, that made me half afraid to mention it.

Ida was not agreeable when she came home. The accident was, in some nameless way, made to further me in the family, if I may use such an expression. She had 'enjoyed her ride immensely,' she said, before she was questioned concerning it, 'enjoyed her ride immensely, as you can only enjoy a ride when you feel sure nothing awkward can possibly happen,' she added, carelessly glancing at me. No one encouraged her to remain with us, so she soon lounged away, gracefully holding up her habit with one hand, the most regal-looking little Amazon fairy I had ever seen.

Of course my ankle was well enough for me to get down stairs and join the family circle the following day. Who would not have put pain aside to be with the Pomfrets on such high festival as they held at that culminating point of the season, Christmas Day?

I could not go to church, but I was up and dressed, and down in the drawing-room, ready to receive them when they returned. Ida looked like an Angora cat—lovelier than ever, in grey or mauve-coloured velvet and fur. What a beauty the girl was! How could any other woman hope to be looked at beside her?

There was a large company to dinner—a high-born, wealthy company, who were, to my surprise, to the full as joyous and amusing as any of the Bohemians with whom I had been wont to associate during my brother's life.

After dinner we played at Spanish Merchant, and Buried Cities, and then, as something was said about dancing—

'Are you fond of it?' Guy Pomfret asked me in a low voice, and I answered, with tears in my eyes—

"Oh, yes; but I can't now," looking at my ankle.

He did not say a word more to me, but turned to his kind old aunt.

'Why treat her to more dead-sea fruits than must be hers in life,' he said. 'Miss Dunbar is fond of dancing,

and Puck has contrived to impair her capability for gratifying that fondness.'

'Ida has contrived, you mean,' the old lady replied (I only knew that she said this afterwards). 'Well, let us tell stories; you begin.'

So the idea of dancing was given up, and 'story telling' was made the order of what remained of the evening.

Guy Pomfret reserved his contribution till the last. Then he told a pretty poetical legend, about an old gorgeously-embossed golden vase, with handles and a cover, that had been in the family for generations. It was a touching, pretty story in itself, and he told it touchingly; so much so that I, feeling my foolish tears would flow if I stayed listening to his thrilling voice any longer, went away by myself to the study.

Presently he followed me. I had buried myself on a couch, and was sobbing over the memory his story had evoked—the memory of my brilliant, bright, darling brother, who, two years ago, had told us a story of a goblet in comic verse.

He soon won me to tell him 'what was grieving me:' won me to speak of my dead brother, and Helen; of our quiet life so soon to be broken up, and my sister's gentle beauty and loving kindness. I even told him of Guy's mug.

'Some day or other I will tell you more about that than even you know,' he said, smiling. 'Now come back to the others, or Ida will be seeking us.'

We went back, and found that I had been missed, really missed. Both Sir Guy and Ida asked me, 'where I had been all this time,' almost eagerly, and old Miss Rachael nodded and laughed at me, and looked generally encouraging.

A week or two after this I was writing to Helen, and I suppose that some of the dejection I was feeling on her account made itself manifest in my face, for Mr. Pomfret asked me, 'Why I wrote things that made me feel miserable?' and I told him.

'You need not be parted from her unless you both like it,' he said quickly. 'I have promised to finish the romance of "Guy's Mug," for you—here it is.' Then he went on to tell me how, a short time before, he had gone into a moneychanger's shop in the Strand, and while he was receiving English silver for his French gold, a lady had entered and pawned a watch and a ring and a little silver goblet with the name of 'Guy Dunbar' on it. 'I guessed it was my poor cousin's widow then,' he

added, 'and I disliked her for what I now know was done solely to help Guy's sister; she wanted you to come here, and I bless her for the act—for, Georgie, will you stay with me always?'

So the end of my letter to Helen was all hope and happiness, and a few months afterwards my health, as Mrs. Pomfret, was drunk by all the family out of 'Guy's Mug.'

HOW I LOST MY WHISKERS.

CHAPTER I.

'DO you object to smoking, sir?

This I asked in my blindest manner of an old gentleman who sat, with his face hidden by a newspaper, opposite to me in a railway carriage.

All the seats in the carriage were filled; I and four others were on our way from Cambridge to enjoy the Christmas vacation. Our spirits were high, for there is a delight in banishing for a time all thoughts of conic sections, Newton's 'Principia,' and the little-go, and entertaining, in exchange, visions of 'hops,' skating parties, and all the

orgies which every right-minded family hold at this season in honour of King Christmas.

But I must introduce you to my chums, for chums we were, although our tastes did not all lie in the same direction. Jack Stirrup is (or rather was at that period) a riding and hunting man, and was not unfrequently to be seen at Newmarket; Stretcher, on the other hand, loved boating, and preferred the sight of a well-developed biceps to that of the best bred hunter, and would often remark to Jack, 'How on earth you can say that you would rather see the "Two Thousand" than

the "Time-race" in the "Colquhoun Sculla," I cannot for the life of me make out.' Edwards was a poor and reading man, but whose wit and talents rendered him a universal favourite; whilst Davies was a rich, open-handed, good-hearted fellow as ever lived. For my own part, I do not think I had any well-defined peculiarity, but did a little of everything. I read a little, rowed a little, hunted a little, had a fair income—in short, if I had any characteristic at all, it was a love of laziness and practical jokes.

We congratulated ourselves in getting a carriage to ourselves (with the exception of the old gentleman I have named), for we intended to keep out the cold, and beguile our journey with sundry pipes and cigars. We had our cases out, and were preparing to light up, as a matter of course, when we were astonished by my *vis-à-vis* dashing away the newspaper which had hidden his face.

'Do I object to smoking? Yes, sir, I do object! I object very strongly, sir! and beg that you will instantly replace your cigars in your pockets. I insist on having no smoking in this carriage!'

We looked aghast at this sudden burst of old-gentlemanly wrath.

'Might I ask if you intend travelling far on this line, sir?' inquired Edwards, in his comically-polite tone.

'What is that to you, sir? What business is it of yours where I am going to?'

'I merely wished to suggest, in case of your travelling far, that, pleasing and delightful as it would be for us to enjoy your agreeable society, yet, nevertheless, we would try to bear the loss, should you prefer to change carriages at the next station.'

'No doubt you would wish to get rid of me; but no, sir! I do not move my seat, and the first one that smokes I report to the guard.'

'In that case, I fear we shall be obliged, painful though it be, to tear ourselves away,' I said, as we drew up at a small station.

Fortunately we found the next compartment empty, and as we started again we pulled out our cigar-cases, this time to light their contents.

'The old boy has certainly got out of bed the wrong side this morning,' said I, puffing away.

'Or has made a mistake in his betting-book,' remarked my sporting friend. 'We'll give him a benefit now, at any rate; I vote we take it in turns to puff smoke through the lamp-hole. Let's

look at him; ha! cooled down a little, is about to compose himself to sleep. I'll trouble you for his nightcap; come and look at it, Fred.'

I did so, and roared on seeing a red, woven cap of conical shape, which added very considerably to the irascity of the wearer's features.

With perseverance which deserved a better cause, we each made a tube of paper, and putting the end through the lamp-hole, took our turn at 'smoking him out;' and I blush as I now think how heartily we enjoyed the enraged state in which he paced up and down the empty carriage, like a caged tiger.

The next time we stopped, however, the guard put his head into our carriage window and said, with a wink—

'Gentl'm in next compartment complains of your smoking, sir.'

'Smoking!' we exclaimed, with mock indignation. 'Do we look as though we'd been smoking? What nonsense!' and added in a mysterious manner, 'You see there's one vacant seat; of course we're not going to tell tales of the man who occupied that.'

'All right!' said the guard, laughing, 'I wasn't born yesterday.' And after a slightly confidential transaction of a pecuniary nature, left us in peace.

The snow, which had been falling heavily all day, now lay thick all around. Our eyes ached again, as we looked out of the window (which was itself all frosted over), on to the dazzling snow which covered all the landscape; and as we stamped our feet on the floor of the carriage, we began heartily to wish ourselves at our journey's end, and by the fireside.

'Halloo! what are we stopping for now? I wonder whether we're going to do an upset, or anything exciting of that kind,' said Davies, looking out of the window. 'I don't see a train anywhere that we can have a friendly collision with.'

'Get out here, gentlemen,' said the guard, passing the window; 'the line is snowed up, and we shall have to wait till it is clear.'

The grumbling which this pleasant announcement caused was immediately stopped by our hearing the voice of our disagreeable companion in the next compartment.

'Line snowed up, is it?' said that gentleman, trying to appear calm in his fury, 'and we get out here? Oh! and do you suppose I am quietly going to submit to this? The line ought to have been cleared ready for us. I shall bring an action.'

'But sir!' I said, 'how on earth could they——'

'Might I request to know who spoke to you, sir? I consider your remark and interference excessive impertinence.'

This was a little too bad, and I turned to Jack and whispered that we would devise some plan of giving our friend a lesson demonstrative of the evils attending bad temper at Christmas time.

We were fortunately stopped at a distance of only two hundred yards from a station; but a very poor station it was, without any waiting-room or refreshment-rooms.

The station-master, who was a pleasant sort of fellow, said we should have to wait but a couple of hours, and gave us a room, where we made the best of a bad job, and having sent for some beer from the nearest 'public,' became, as Edwards mathematically observed, approximately happy. The old gentleman, however, had not yet vented all his wrath, but kept on anathematizing the snow and the railway people at intervals. After we had warmed ourselves, Stretcher proposed that we should have some songs; but as no one volunteered, I suggested that we should get on our way sooner if we all went out and helped to clear away the snow from the line. To this all agreed (with the exception of our amiable friend, of course).

We had worked away merrily for about an hour, and were congratulating ourselves on being able to start again, when Jack came running up with a very pleased expression of countenance, and as he tapped me on the shoulder, I remembered that he had not been with us for the last half-hour.

'Fred,' he said, 'I've an idea.'

'Keep it then,' I replied, 'for it is so rare a commodity with you, that I would not deprive you of it for the world.'

'Don't chaff, and I'll tell you all about it. I went up into the room at the station just now, and found our friend, the old boy, fast asleep in his chair, completely collapsed under the soporific effects of the fire, and a glass of brandy-and-water. I immediately ran into the village and bought these,' he said, showing me a handful of screws, a gimlet, and a screwdriver.

'What in the name of everything ridiculous do you want these for?' I asked.

'Don't you see? we shall be able to start again directly, now that the line is clear; we meanwhile run up stairs, and screw the old gentleman firmly into the room—the train goes on—we are re-

venged for his surly behaviour to us, and he will then learn that "old gentlemen should not be ill-tempered at Christmas time."'

'Capital!' I said, always ready to fall in with a practical joke; 'let us be off at once.'

We certainly found the old gentleman in as Morphean a torpor as we could wish. His feet were propped up on a chair, whilst his boots were drying, and he was breathing with his mouth wide open, in a rather apoplectic manner.

'Shall I put a snowball into each of his boots?' I said.

'No! that would be too much of a good thing, but I'll tell you what you shall do; you're rather a swell at drawing, aren't you? I'll just burn the end of that beer-bottle cork, and you shall artistically adorn his face.'

'That is splendid,' he whispered, as I finished off with giving him a moustache, which turned up in a facetious manner. 'Just move that looking-glass, and put it so that he may admire himself directly he wakes; and now let us be off.'

We walked on tiptoe to the door. The hinges began to creak; and cold as the weather was, a faint perspiration began to develop itself on my forehead, as I noticed the old gentleman move in his chair; it was, however, only to turn his head on to the other shoulder, and we closed the door in safety.

'Give me the screws quick,' I said, 'and go to the bottom of the stairs and prevent any one coming up.'

I bored hole after hole as noiselessly as I could, and having made the door as fast as eight good screws would make it, I ran down stairs and whispered 'All right!'

'Is there a gentleman up-stairs, sir?' said the station-master, walking towards us. 'He asked me to wake him in time for the train, and it is just ready to go.'

'Oh! he won't like to be disturbed till the last moment, you may be sure,' said Jack. 'By-the-by, I wished to talk to you of a plan by which I think your station might be much improved.'

Now architecture happened to be one of the station-master's hobbies, and they were soon deep in discussion. I beat a hasty retreat to the guard, and producing a sovereign, said—

'If you get us off in five minutes from now, waiting for no one, and ring your bell at the very last minute, this is yours.'

'All right, sir! the luggage is all in,

and most of the passengers. Take your seats. Going on!' he shouted, whilst I stood with my watch in hand.

'One minute left! Ring the bell now!' I said. 'If they undo those screws in one, or even five minutes, I'll eat them.'

We jumped into a carriage, the guard gave the final whistle, and the train moved slowly on. We anxiously watched the result of our plot, with our heads out of window. After waiting one or two minutes, we noticed a figure gesticulating at the station window. The train then passed into a deep cutting, and we lost sight of it.

CHAPTER II.

I think I have forgotten to say that I was going to spend the Christmas with a college friend. He had gone down a few days before, and had promised to meet me at C—— station.

You may imagine that I was not sorry to find myself arrived there, nor yet to see my friend Tom stamping his feet on the platform, no doubt thoroughly tired of waiting for the train. As he drove me up, he began talking of the different arrangements he had made for our mutual amusement. 'To-morrow,' he said, 'I've set aside for a skating party; I have had the pond in the park swept, and invited all "les jeunes demoiselles" within reach, and as they have all accepted, it will give you a very fair idea of our "native" beauty.'

Now, of all jolly things in the world, I think a skating party is the jolliest. Tom says that I am fond of showing my skating off; but I deny that this has anything to do with it. In the first place, the frosty weather (and the mulled claret) induce high spirits;—then there are the tumbles to laugh at, and the ladies' skates to strap on (which last, in my own mind, is not the least pleasant part of the entertainment).

We had by this time reached the house, and, after having accomplished our toilettes, Tom took me into the drawing-room.

'The guv'nor isn't at home; but let me introduce you to my sister Minnie.'

Miss Minnie rose, and held out her hand at once, but, for my own part, I was too dumfounded to utter a single word. I am told that I am far from eloquent when describing female beauty, so I will not attempt it here; but I must say that I had never, and have never since, seen such a pretty and merry face. When dinner was announced, however, I had recovered my equanimity sufficiently to offer her my arm,

and after a short time we got to know one another thoroughly.

The dinner (perhaps it may have been the port wine) had opened my heart, and when we removed to Tom's sanctum to smoke (where, by-the-by, Miss Minnie insisted on joining us, saying that she 'liked the smell of tobacco, and found it so dull by herself'), I began to relate my adventures with the old gentleman.

Peal after peal of laughter arose as I proceeded with my narrative. I warmed with my subject, quite outdoing myself in the description of the old gentleman's angry face and his irate behaviour.

'Here!' I said, in triumph, 'is my trophy!'—and I held out the nightcap.

Never shall I forget that moment—brother and sister stared at it for one second, and then Tom, looking vacantly at me, immediately went into an hysterical fit of laughter. His face began to grow quite black, and the tears rolled down his cheeks.

My face presented anything but a laughing appearance, for I was struck with amazement at this behaviour. At last, with what little breath he had left, he managed to get out the words—

'It's—the—guv—nor's—night—cap!'

As he said this he pointed to a small label inside the cap, which I had not noticed before, and there, sure enough, were the words

T. Grumblethorp, Esq.,

Grumblethorp Hall.

Reader, have you ever wished the earth to open and swallow you up? How heartily did I wish it at that moment. I saw the whole affair at a glance;—I had been playing a practical joke upon the gentleman in whose house I was sitting, and had been describing him in the most ridiculous light to his daughter. How I hated Tom for laughing (his sister was nearly as bad, by-the-way), whilst I sat turning alternately red and pale, considering what on earth was to be done. At this moment a servant entered the room.

'A telegram for Miss Grumblethorp.'

She hastily looked over it, and then read it aloud to us:—

'Shall come by the 8.30 to-morrow morning. Some young jackanapes have played a practical joke, and caused me to miss the last train to-night.'

At last I found words. 'Tom,' I said, 'I must fly. Miss Grumblethorp, I cannot sufficiently apologize to you for——'

'Oh! you need not apologize to me, nor must you go either. Tom, you

must devise some escape out of the dilemma.'

'It would certainly never do for the governor to recognize you; he'd never forgive you, and would cut me off with a shilling. Oh! I have it;—I sentence you, in punishment, to cut off those whiskers and moustache—he'll never know you then.'

'Never!' I said, with determination. 'I'm not a vain man, but I will never voluntarily make a fright of myself.'

'Oh! I'm sure you'd look much better without them,' said Miss Grumblethorp; 'besides, remember the skating party to-morrow; I want you to teach me so much. You really must not go.'

I was not proof against this. The adorable Miss Minnie actually wishing me to stay! Again, I recollected that I had no other invitation for Christmas, and all my family were spending the winter abroad. Under these circumstances, I determined to risk all, and stay where I was sure to enjoy myself.

Next morning I rose early, had a 'clean shave,' and borrowed a pair of light-blue spectacles. When I met Miss Grumblethorp on my way to breakfast, she declared the disguise was capital, telling me, at the same time, that her father had arrived, and was in

the breakfast-room. I was formally introduced, and by the way that he received me it was evident he had not recognized me in the least.

'Always glad to see Tom's friends,' said the old boy, in quite a cheerful tone. 'Thank goodness he doesn't choose for companions such puppies as those who insulted me yesterday. I wonder whether they consider themselves gentlemen?'

In this strain he continued to talk all breakfast-time, whilst I answered with perfect gravity, not daring to look at Minnie, for I felt sure she was enjoying the joke.

My story is nearly over. I enjoyed the skating party thoroughly, for I spent most of the day in teaching Minnie. I also accompanied her the next evening to a ball, where I found she could move much more quickly and gracefully than on the ice.

* * * *

I am now married; and though I have since grown my whiskers, yet my father-in-law has never suspected that I was 'the young jackanapes that made him late for the train' (he has never mentioned the burnt-cork business), and has always been so kind to me that I have heartily repented of it.

K. N.

DID I OFFEND?

DID I offend? Pretty cousin, believe me,
Nothing on earth could be half so provoking;
Nothing on earth, pretty cousin, would grieve me;
Nearly so deeply. But say, are you joking?
All very well, as a joke, to *pretend*:—
Tell me sincerely, though; did I offend?

Only a kiss! Is it wrong to make merry
Just at the merriest season of seasons?
Take the cold weather—the lips—and the berry;—
Not as excuses, but only as reasons.
Mistletoe, Christmas, and Beauty befriend
Sinners, if I be one. Did I offend?

Kisses, of course, I shall have by the dozen;
Kisses—but not of the kind that I value;
Not like the kiss of just now, pretty cousin.
Shall you forget it?—Oh, answer me, *shall you*?
Ere you forget it you *must* condescend
Frankly to answer me; did I offend?

What are our games, and our gifts, and our dinner;
What are our mistletoe-boughs and our holly?
How—if I sneak through the day like a sinner—
How can the 'festive occasion' be jolly?
Do put my fears and my doubts at an end:
Look in my face, cousin.—*Did I offend?*

HENRY S. LEIGH.

MY CHRISTMAS BOX.

MANY years ago, in my round-jacket days, there was an oft-told story popular among schoolboys, of a certain Frenchman who came across the British Channel on a visit to this country, and whose limited acquaintance with our language, added to a combination of circumstances which I will not attempt to detail, led him to rashly infer that half the English vocabulary was represented by the word *Box*. The intelligent foreigner used to be described as riding on the front outside seat of a mail coach, which I need scarcely say his fellow-passengers called the 'box' seat. He chances to inquire the purpose of a little cockney habitation perched upon the hill-side, and is told that it is a shooting-box. He marvels at a few quaintly clipped trees standing within a cottage paling, and the driver straightway informs him that they are *box-trees*. By-and-by as they drive through a village two urchins are seen at fisticuffs, on the pavement. 'Que diable! vat you call that sport there?' 'What, those little chaps fighting? C'est le *boze*, Mossoo; English art of self-defence, vous savez!' Just as they turn a corner in the road there is a shout from some rustics behind. The guard looks round—the driver pulls up. Something has fallen from the rumble. 'Ah tenez! e'est donc une valise——?' &c. &c. [Here we may suppose some ten minutes of lively prattle on the part of Mossoo]. 'What is it, Bill?' cries Mr. Flickstar, tugging at the ribbons. 'Only a darned old *box* tumbled off.' '*Box* again! Mon Dieu!' ejaculates the foreigner, and once more the wheels are trundling onwards.

Well, I won't pursue the story to its end, or describe how this unhappy Frenchman was driven to the verge of madness by the constant repetition of a monosyllable which kept on turning up with the pertinacity of a recurring decimal. The truth is, the anecdote is a plaguy long one, and judged by the light of maturer years is not calculated to inspire any but very young ladies and gentlemen with merriment. I have merely alluded to it as the only one out of my famous *repertoire* (six is my average at every dinner party, with, say a couple more for the ladies upstairs)—the only one which would form an appropriate introduction to this article, and give the reader a sly hint that a Christmas-box may be a box in more senses than one.

The truth is it was a real box—not a

new half-crown slipped into the palm of a twopenny postman as he stands shivering with a blue nose at your hall-door; nor a five-shilling piece, accepted with a curtesy by Betty the housemaid; no, nor that bright, yellow sovereign which Master Dick annually expects from his godpapa on New Year's Day, but a box in the sternest and most material signification of the word, *i.e.* a box with a lid and hinges, lock and key, manufactured, as I have every reason to believe, by those eminent stationers and dressing-case makers, Messrs. Parmegiano and Giotto, of Oxford Street.

And a mighty pretty little box it was, to be sure, covered with brown morocco leather outside, and overlaid with curiously wrought brass corner-plates and escutcheons, lined internally with blue silk. There was my name and crest, if you please, underneath the handle, and everything about it as complete as need be.

Now, how came I, a wretched young bachelor, living in dingy chambers, with just sufficient furniture about me for comfort and nothing more—who light myself to bed with an eighteen-penny candlestick, and brew my souchong in Britannia metal—how happened it, I say, that I fell into possession of such a dandified and elegant article of household use?

The answer is simple enough. It was given to me. So far so good. But by whom? Evidently by no one of my own sex. Such luxurious souvenirs are not exchanged by whiskered friends. No; it was a pledge of affection from my lovely and (let me say at once) *unmarried* cousins, Rose and Laura Winsome, who had despatched it from Hollygate per Great Western Railway train (this side upwards, to be kept dry), so that it arrived one Christmas Eve by parcels delivery; and I perfectly remember Mrs. Kinahan, my worthy but too-often-inebriated laundress, bringing it in triumphantly, under a false impression that it was a Stilton cheese, and possibly (for my cupboard lock is frequently out of repair) in the fond belief that before long some of it might fall to her share. I recollect being requested to sign my autograph in a sort of ledger, by way of acknowledging the receipt of my parcel from the G. W. R. Company, and, at last, examining its contents.

Those dear girls (Heaven bless 'em!) had written me a joint letter to say how sorry they were that I was prevented

from paying my usual visit to Hollygate that winter; wanted to know whether I remembered the fun we all had last Christmas Eve (didn't I!), but had no doubt I should *enjoy* myself as *much*, if not *more*, where I was going (&c. &c., with a great many notes of admiration, and every other word underlined). Finally, I was asked to accept their best wishes for the season, together with the accompanying little souvenir, which they hoped I should like. It was mamma's choice. She bought it at Exeter, and the Rev. Minton Tyler, their new curate, said it was very pretty and *quite mediæval*—(and he ought to know, you know, because his brother is a member of the Oxbridge Antiquarian Society)—I should find the key wrapped in a bit of silver paper inside, &c. &c.

All very well; but what in the name of fortune was I to do with my box? To what possible use could I put it? I couldn't use it as a glove box, for I don't keep light kids on stock. I couldn't use it as a cigar-box, for that would have been—so to speak—desecration. I couldn't use it as a jewel-box, for I hadn't any jewellery. At last a brilliant idea occurred to me. I would turn it into a cash-box. It is true that I had very little to deposit in the way of actual specie, but there was a certain advantage in that fact, for the box would thus have an easy time of it, and be put to less wear and tear. Besides, I was in possession of a score or two of letters from——well, perhaps, from one of my cousins, which had long lain ignobly in the drawer of my wardrobe. I determined that they should be henceforth enshrined, with due dignity, in my new cash-box, and that where my treasure was, there should my heart be also.

Well, I penned a letter full of gratitude to the Misses Winsome, deposited their present in my bureau, packed up my traps, and went down to Grimwood Hall, a short distance from London, to spend Christmas. I didn't stay there long. The fact is that Grimwood is *not* like Hollygate. My host and hostess were very kind, and I had a little hunting and a little dancing, and a great deal of dining, but all the time I could not help thinking that I should have been ten times as jolly at Hollygate—walking out with the girls—helping them to decorate the church for Christmas Day under the Rev. Minton Tyler's superintendence—to say nothing of tying up the mistletoe bough in that dear old oak-panelled dining-room. However, it couldn't be helped, and so I made the best of it, and came back to town just in time for the pantomimes.

Well; I went to a pantomime, and enjoyed myself as I always do on such occasions. My old friend, Dick Dewberry, called for me one evening, and we both went off together, taking a chop at the Rainbow en route, and winding up with a Welsh rarebit at Evans's. Those to whom the domestic economy of life in chambers is familiar, well know how much a bachelor thus lodged lies at the mercy of his laundress. An Englishman's house is said to be his castle, and on the same principle any young fellow who sports his oak ought to escape all intrusion from the outside world. But there is one grim invader of our second-floor sanctuaries whom neither bolt nor bar can exclude. Mrs. Kinahan had a duplicate of my door-key, and came in and out when she liked. Being perfectly aware of this fact, and also that she was a lady of a very inquiring turn of mind, I was in the habit of locking up an old-fashioned bureau, where I kept a few knickknacks, old letters, &c., whenever I left my chambers. It so happened, however, that on the evening in question I left it unlocked, and it also happened that I had chosen it some days before as the repository for my cousins' present. I came home rather tired from the theatre and went to bed at once. But the next morning, having occasion to go to this bureau, I discovered, to my great astonishment and indignation, that the 'Christmas-box' had disappeared. My first hope was that I had overlooked it. I might have left it in some drawer or shelf in the upper part of the bureau. I rummaged every corner hastily, and finding no trace of the box summoned Mrs. Kinahan and told her what had happened.

She began in the usual way by remarking, as if it were a peculiar trait in her disposition, that she scorned a thief; that if I had lost anything in the house, why, of course, in the house it must be; that no other gents had ever made a sim'lar complaint; that she had been in the charing line twenty-sivin year come Lady Day; and that the breath of calomel had never reached her yet, which of course it was as unpleasant to her as it was to me, and would I please to try and recollect when I see it last.

'Why yesterday afternoon, before I went out,' said I. 'Has any one but yourself been in the room since?'

'Not a livink soul!' exclaimed Mrs. Kinahan, emphatically.

'Quite sure of that?'

'Mr. Easel,' remarked my laundress, laying her hand upon a brown Holland

stomacher, 'if I was never to move from this here spot again. I——lor, there now—I declare I never thought of that,' said she, suddenly interrupting herself.

'Never thought of *what*?' said I.

'Why, the sweeps!'

'Sweeps,' I said, in some amazement—'what sweeps?'

'Why, they sweeps as come early this morning to do your and Mr. Mugwell's chimbleys.'

'You don't mean to say you allowed any strange man to be in this room alone?' I asked.

'Alone. Oh dear no, sir. I was in the room the whole of the time—excepting, as you may say, ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, while I went down to Mr. Mugwell's rooms to look after the other sweep, which both are highly respectable men, for I know the sister-in-law of one of them is acquainted with Mrs. Sutcliffe, who sits under the same minister with me at Sarum chapel.'

'Indeed,' said I, not quite seeing what Mrs. Sutcliffe's theological convictions had to do with the question.

'Well, and so you left this fellow here by himself for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour?'

'There or thereabouts, sir,' said Mrs. K., smoothing down her apron with great complacency.

'Then allow me to tell you, Mrs. Kinahan, that you acted like an idiot—that I shall at once put the matter in the hands of the police—and that I have to request you to wait here until my return,' said I, hastily snatching up my hat.

'As you p—p—please, sir,' stammered Mrs. K., 'but I put it to you, Mr. Easel, how could any one go for to suppose that, in a matter of ten minutes, which it were *not* more, and him being own brother-in-law to a friend of Mrs. Sutcliffe——'

'Oh, confound Mrs. Sutcliffe,' said I, rushing down stairs, and having hailed a Hansom cab, I jumped in and drove to the nearest police-station.

I don't know whether it may be derived from early associations, and that undefined but abiding terror of the Force with which my ancient nurse, Sairey-Jane, managed to imbue my youthful mind, but if, at the age of six, I laboured under an impression that the strong arm of the law could at any time be brought to bear on little boys who smeared their pinafores, resisted the painful but salutary application of the small-tooth comb, or declined to go to bed at eight o'clock—if I mistook certain gallant attentions which X 22 was

in the habit of paying my attendant for an anxiety concerning my moral bearing in regard to Sundays, these delusions have not been without their influence in after life. To this day, a policeman in the public discharge of his duty is in my eyes a being of no ordinary importance, and I experience an uncomfortable sensation of extra responsibility whenever I enter a station-house. Could those blue-coated gentlemen read the history of your life up to the present moment—were they aware of all the secret imaginings of your heart—did they know, for instance, the extent of your balance at the banker's—your notions on apostolical succession—or how you caught that cold by walking up and down a certain street of Mayfair the other night with your eyes sadly fixed upon a certain lighted window of a certain house? Supposing all these particulars, I say, to have been investigated by X 22—imagine that he has taken stock of your movements and dotted down his estimate of your general character in his pocket-book—shouldn't you feel somewhat uncomfortable in his presence? Can't you fancy him coming up, touching you gently on the shoulder, and telling you you're 'wanted?'

Some vague apprehension of this sort always haunts me at a police-court. I feel desirous of explaining at once to those lynx-eyed, sturdy servants of justice that, in spite of all my shortcomings and thriftless moments, I am *not* the man who committed the Waterloo Bridge murder; that I really had nothing to do with that robbery of plate in Little Bullion Street; and as for the young lady with fair and blue eyes, age nineteen, who left her home clad in a striped silk dress, white chip bonnet, and black lace shawl, with a strawberry mark under her right ear, I know no more of her present destination than her disconsolate great aunt, from whose house she eloped.

When the inspector of the X + Y division had listened to the complaint of a small greengrocer who wanted to take out a summons against his wife for giving him a black eye, and had prescribed a cool retreat in the adjoining cell for a red-haired youth who appeared to be impertinently drunk, he turned to me with stern politeness, and dipping his pen afresh in the ink before him, inquired my business. I told him in as few words as possible what had happened.

'Was there much money in the box?' he asked, when I had made an end of my story.

'Only two or three sovereigns and some silver,' I said, 'but that's not so much consequence to me as—as—'

'As what, sir?' said the inspector, blandly.

'Why, the fact is,' I added, with a sudden consciousness that I was getting rather red in the face, 'the fact is there was a bundle of letters which——'

'Quite so, sir,' said the inspector (who seemed to see through the whole thing in that short space of time familiarly known as a jiffy), 'and you'd like to get 'em again, I suppose. Well, Mr. Easel, I'll see what can be done for you. It's a detective's job, that's what it is. Now, I've got a very sharp officer here, name of McNabb, just the man to find out all about it. Here! you chaps over there. Seen anything of McNabb this morning?'

'He was here about half an hour ago, sir, but I think he's gone home to dinner,' was the answer.

'Well, one of you just step up and tell him to come down here to me as soon as he can.'

The messenger set off on his errand, and being assured by the inspector that Mr. McNabb would soon follow me, I returned to my chambers to await his arrival. I had never been brought face to face with a detective before, and having heard wondrous stories of their sagacity and indefatigable zeal, prepared myself for a great display of both qualities. I felt, therefore, slightly disappointed when Mr. McNabb arrived to find him a very ordinary-looking man with a benevolent, easy-going sort of expression, as if he looked upon his calling in the light of a good practical joke which had never been sufficiently appreciated.

He asked me to repeat what I had already told the inspector, and made sundry inquiries as to the character of Mrs. Kinahan, on which I felt bound to reveal her partiality for Jamaica rum (though, to do her justice, she never indulged in that cordial as long as she could get at my cognac). I also mentioned a chronic absorption of pence, which I had observed whenever I left them on the mantelpiece, and especially commented on Mrs. K.'s insatiable appetite for manuscript literature, particularly when it took the form of private correspondence.

Mr. McNabb received this information with a benevolent smile, and gave me to understand that there was nothing of an important or exceptional character about these phenomena. He added, however, that it would be advisable, for certain reasons of his own, to have a

private interview with my laundress at once. I therefore called Mrs. K. (who had lingered at the top of the stairs improvising fictitious corkcrews out of the corners of her apron), and sent her into my study, where she remained closeted with Mr. McNabb for the space of ten minutes. At the end of that time Mrs. K., still engaged in the manufacture of corkcrews, larger and more feeble than before, came out, and I joined the detective, whose countenance instantly assumed a significant but placid expression.

'Well, sir,' said he, shutting the door, and looking carefully round the studio—as if my lay figure couldn't keep a secret,—'well, sir, I think there's little doubt what's at the bottom of this here business.'

'Sharp fellow!' I thought; 'found it all out already.'

'It's my opinion,' continued the McNabb slowly, and with great *aplomb*—'it's my opinion, sir, that it was the sweep as done it.'

This conclusion seemed to my mind so excessively obvious that I was somewhat surprised at its being announced in such an oracular manner.

'Your laundress,' added the detective, 'who appears to me a most respectable person, and as for a drop now and then why you know they all *will* have it, Mr. Easel,—your laundress, sir, tells me that she left this man some ten minutes or more in your room—and I believe her, sir—I think, when she says that, that she's telling the truth, Mr. Easel.'

'I haven't a doubt of it,' said I; 'but what then?'

'Well, sir, I shall make it my business to verify that statement by inquiring from private sources into the character of Mrs. K., and I shall find out all about her, sir, from a child up'ard, as you'll see.'

'Very good,' said I, 'but with regard to the sweep?'

'With regard to the sweep, sir,' said the McNabb, with a determined air, 'I propose to go at once to his lodgings and see what's to be got out of him. Mrs. Kinahan told me where he lives, and I've took down the address.'

'Shall I come with you?' I asked.

'Why, p'raps it *would* be as well, sir,' said Mr. McNabb, taking up his hat; 'only keep in the background till I've spoke to him, if you please.'

It was only a couple of minutes' walk to the house in which Mrs. Sutcliffe's friend's brother-in-law lived. We found it in a little dirty street, half of which had been converted into shops devoted

chiefly to the sale of coals and green-grocery, with here and there a news-vendor and tobacconist's, or a small establishment for the repair of broken crockery.

'No. 42, I think?' said Mr. McNabb, surveying the house in question with a professional eye. The ground-floor was occupied by a marine store dealer. On the upper story was exhibited a panel picture of a yellow rack or other instrument of torture on a blue ground, with the dubious inscription, 'MANGLING DONE HERE,' appended below. The sweep lived in the basement floor. Mrs. Kinahan had given us the address.

Mr. McNabb, having made in his own mind what the doctors call a rapid diagnosis of the external aspect of affairs, and desiring me to wait outside, forthwith entered the house by its open door, and descended what are generally called the kitchen stairs, but which, in this instance, led to the sweep's apartments. After a short interval I could hear that a violent altercation was going on downstairs, and, indeed, as I was standing close to the area railings, some very emphatic adjectives and substantives reached my ear through the open window below. In the meantime Mr. McNabb had been joined by a member of the regular Force, who, seeing a detective enter the house, came to the conclusion that something was 'up,' and went to offer his assistance.

In about half an hour they came out, the McNabb looking somewhat hot and flustered, as if he had been engaged in a scuffle, which, indeed, turned out to be the case. It appeared that, on entering the premises he had at once charged the sweep with the robbery and stated his intention of searching the rooms. To this proceeding Mr. Tozer (who was in a very beery state) expressed an objection by charging at him with a broom, on which the detective was under the painful necessity of knocking him down there and then. This little ceremony being concluded, the McNabb, backed by professional assistance, carried out his original purpose amidst a volley of loud and unpleasant ejaculations on the part of the sweep, who threatened both the policemen with immediate vivisection, and a series of anatomical experiments relating to their heads, hearts, and livers, whenever he should catch them alone. Not a trace, however, of the box or its contents was to be found. 'And, what's more, sir,' said the detective, 'it ain't no manner of use trying to get anything out of that fellow while he's in that state. He's not, as you may say, amenable to reason now; but

if we stop till to-morrow, when he's sobered a bit, I'll tackle him again.'

'In the meantime he may destroy the box and its contents,' I suggested.

'So he may, sir,' said the detective, 'but then again he *may* not, and one thing is quite certain—we can't get at it now.'

'But you might take him into custody, mightn't you?' I asked.

'Mr. Easel,' said the McNabb, 'I'd lock him up directly if you give him in charge, but where would be the use of it? We've got nothing to go upon—not a scrap o' evidence, and that's where it is, you see. S'pose we took him afore the magistrate: well, the magistrate hears the case. Well, he says, "I can't detain the man on sich grounds as these," he says. Well, the man's discharged, and I'm reprimanded, and may be you get something disagreeable said to you. Well, you know that ain't pleasant, Mr. Easel.'

There was no gainsaying this argument, and so I agreed to wait until the following day, when Mr. McNabb promised to renew his efforts, and in the meantime to make all possible inquiry regarding the sweep's antecedents. I went back to my chambers, as may be supposed, in no very happy frame of mind, reflecting on my carelessness in leaving my bureau unlocked, speculating on the probable fate of my unlucky letters, and wondering whether I should ever see them again. About eight o'clock that evening I was sitting before a roaring fire, trying to console myself with a pipe, and brooding over my loss, while the snow fell heavily outside and drifted into the angles of my study window, when I was startled by a single rap on the knocker of my outer door. The weather was far too cold and stormy for the chance of a friendly bachelor visit. I expected nothing to be sent home for me, and altogether the summons took me so much by surprise, that I half hesitated to open the door. I had scarcely risen from my chair, however, before I heard another rap louder than the last, and then a succession of very feeble ones, but all of the same monosyllabic character. There is a little space between the double doors of my chambers, which is quite dark at night, so that when I had opened them I was obliged to retreat a few paces before I could see who was outside. At first I could see nothing at all, but on looking more attentively I became aware of two red and bleary eyes which kept winking insensately in the darkness. I could see no body belonging to them, but a few flakes of snow dimly out-

lined what I presumed to be the figure of a man.

'Who's there?' I said, at last.

No one answered, but the eyes went on blinking.

'What do you want?' I asked.

The only reply I got this time was a very sudden but decided hiccup.

'Come in directly,' said I, 'or I shall shut the door again.'

At this injunction the figure moved slowly forwards, catching hold of the doorpost and wall as if to steady itself. At last it entered the room, and by the light of my reading-lamp I ascertained that my visitor was a short man covered

with soot and very tipsy. It is rash to jump hastily to conclusions, but it now became pretty clear to me who this gentleman was, and why he had put in an appearance. Moving by slow degrees further into the room, and catching hold of the back of a chair which swayed to and fro under his grasp, he smiled at me, hiccuped, smiled again, and then suddenly assuming an air of intense seriousness, drew a card out of his pocket and presented to me with a low bow which, in his unstable condition, very nearly became a tumble.

I took the card, and read as follows:—



SAM^L TOZER

Practical and Theoretical Chimney-Sweep,

42 Little Ashton Street,

3 doors from Rakewell Place Sandown Square.

S. T. begs to return his respectful thanks for the liberal support he has received, also to state Nothing shall be wanting on his part to give Every satisfaction having had many years Experience prompts him to solicit their future patronage and kind recommendation.

All orders by Post or Otherwise thankfully received
and punctually attended to as he attends to Business himself.

SMOKY CHIMNEYS & FLUES EFFECTUALLY CURED

All kinds of Chimneys Climbed and Examined for Builders
and others if Required.

 **PLEASE TO RING THE SWEEP'S BELL.**

CAUTION—Beware of Spurious Parties loitering about the corner of Streets and calling at houses for Orders in my name.

In case of fire, Please to hang up this Card in the Kitchen.

'Are you the man who swept my chimney this morning?' I asked.

'Yesh, I—I—[hic]—amsir,' said the sweep. 'Thashmycard, country ordersh p—p—punchally attended to.'

'Then all I have to say is——' I began.

'Shtopabit Mister Easel,' said the man; 'shtop—I know what you're [hic] going to say, but ponmylife—I—really, I—I take my dick, I don't—know—nothing—about—it—There!'

'Sir,' said I, in a great rage, 'the police have already——'

'Shtop a moment, Miss—mistreasel; look 'ere now, thashwashamcoming—to,' said Mr. Tozer, beginning in a very low key and suddenly raising his voice into a shrill whisper. 'Look 'ere, Mr. Easel, you've been shending per—p—perlease—pleasman to my 'ouse—pleasman comsh to me and [hic] asksh me about a box—I dunnow nothing about a box—I sez, I knows [hic] nothing about a box—pleasman sez I does; I sez I poesn't, and pleasman knocks me down

—werry ungen'lemanly thing that, Mr. Easel—and un—ch—christian—too, I call it.'

'Perhaps you think so, Mr. Tozer,' said I, 'but the fact is——'

'Mistreasel, sir, you've got shervant—have you ashked thashervant whashe knows about thish box? Why not ashker; why come to me about the box? Look 'ere—I—I've swep chimneysh hereaboush ever sinsh—ever—sinsh I [hic] eversinsh——'

Here Mr. Tozer, overcome with emotion, said no more but let go the chair at a great risk of tumbling over, and holding the palm of his left hand horizontally, about a couple of feet from the floor, pointed at it with his right finger as steadily as he could. This remarkable pantomime I interpreted as an indication of the stature he had attained at the commencement of his professional career. But even supposing this to be correct, and that he really had begun to sweep chimneys at two years old, this fact did not affect the question of his

general integrity, and so I told him, as politely as I could.

'Verriwellsir,' said he, drawing himself up to his full height (about four feet six), and leaning against the wall in a heroic attitude, 'verrigood Mish-treasel—Youfyou—thinkigotyercashbox, I tell you, I'd—I dunnownothinabout cashbox, I nevershawcashbox in my life—I—[hic]—say—wotishacashbox? Mishter Easel I shwear I 'ave not got yercashbox—so help—so help my—[hic]—GOODNESS!'

At this juncture Mr. Tozer's feet slid violently apart, and he was nearly descending to the floor in an acrobatic attitude, when I picked him up and guiding him by the shoulder, put him outside my room and shut the door. For a short interval there was a feeble kicking at the panel, but this gradually subsided, and at last I had the satisfaction to hear Mr. Tozer slowly bumping down stairs.

The next morning at breakfast, while turning over this adventure in my mind, it occurred to me that so dirty a thief as the sweep could hardly have opened my bureau and taken anything out of it without leaving some trace of his handiwork behind him. I determined to search the place well, and sure enough on the under side of the shelf beneath which my Christmas Box was placed, I found a sooty smear, as if it had been grazed by a sleeve. This placed the matter beyond a doubt. When the detective came, he told me that he had made the fullest inquiry regarding Mrs. Kinahan, whose character (saving in the particular before mentioned) was irreproachable; that he had ascertained the sweep, on the contrary, to be 'a bad lot;' that he feared I should never see my papers again, but that he was prepared to do everything for me in his power, &c. &c.

I then showed him my discovery of the soot-mark, in which he seemed much interested. 'Most sing'lar thing, sir,' said he. 'I thought of that yesterday.'

'Thought of what?' said I.

'Of looking into your bureau to see if he had left a mark.'

'But you didn't do so,' I observed.

'Well, no, Mr. Easel, I did not; but my intention was the same, you see. And all this proves to me, sir, how right I was in the first conclusion I come to in this here matter. The moment I heard just the outline of the case, I says to myself, I says, it's the sweep 'as done it. And what's more, sir, you may depend on it the sweep *did* do it, and no one else.'

However gratifying this assurance might have been at an earlier stage of the proceeding, I felt it a little redundant now; and therefore, while assuring the McNabb of my confidence in his penetration, I said that we had better, now that this point was established, turn our attention to the best means of getting the box restored. I told him that I was quite prepared to sacrifice the money which it contained, and even give a sovereign by way of *douceur* to any one who would bring back the box and letters. This latter proposal the McNabb at first opposed, saying that he thought it was like compounding a felony, and he didn't know what the inspector would say; but on my showing him first that I had yet made no formal charge against the man, and secondly, that if I chose to give my coat to any one who had previously robbed me of my cloak, I was not aware that the law could interfere to prevent my doing so, he seemed to see the matter in a new light, and promised to leave word at the shops in Little Ashton Street that I had offered a reward for the partial restitution of my property.

In the afternoon of the next day I was honoured by another visit from Mr. Tozer; this time pretty sober, but wearing such a scoundrelly expression of deceit and assurance, that I had the greatest difficulty in restraining my wrath. He plunged at once into the subject, and I took care to be cautious.

'Mr. Easel, sir,' said he, making me a cringing sort of bow, 'I understand as 'ow you've hofferred a reward for this here box wot's missing.'

'I have,' said I, 'and if you will only bring it to me——'

'I, sir!' rejoined the sweep, with a bad pretence at surprise. 'I! Lor bless yerrart, 'ow should I come by it?'

'That I won't ask,' I said; 'but if you will only bring it here, or get it sent to Mr. McNabb, the reward shall be yours.'

'Sir,' said the sweep, 'that you're a gentelman is apparient, and being on-rabble I respecx you as sich. But with regard to this 'ere box, which in course I never see it, being innasent, s'elp me eving, nothink 'ud be prouder and wil-linger than me in serving you in bringing back that box which I never took away, no, nor know no more about it than the hunborn snow; for what I say is, rewards is nothink to a honest man, and though a numble sweep, was never knowd to prig a 'apenny, yet knocked down and used shameful by pleasmen as ought to know better——'

'Well, Mr. Tozer,' said I, wishing to

cut short this harangue, 'the box has been taken by some hands, that's certain, and the thief, whoever he may be—'

'Don't say *he*,' whined the sweep. 'It *might* have been a *SHE*!'

'Well,' said I, 'whoever it was managed to carry it off the premises. Now, you know, Mr. Tozer, these ill-gotten gains never stay long in one place; they pass from hand to hand.'

'Just so, sir,' said the sweep, as if he began to see my drift.

'Supposing,' I said, 'by any remote accident this box fell into your possession?'

'Don't think it likely myself,' said Mr. Tozer. 'However, there's no saying.'

'In that case,' I went on, 'you'd feel bound to bring it back to its rightful owner, and naturally claim the reward.'

The sooty scoundrel's eyes twinkled a little here as he replied in a mock heroic voice, 'Mr. Heasel, I should deem it a honour to serve you anyways in my power.'

'Or if, to save you from the trouble of coming here, I sent Mr. McNabb to your lodgings, you could give it to him, you know.'

Mr. Tozer winced a little at this suggestion. 'I don't want no pleasmen a bothering me,' he said. 'That McNabb has a uncommon disagreeable way o' going to work. Me and him had a difference the other day—besides, why should I 'ave the box? If I hears anythink about it, in course I'll do my dooty. It *might* be brought back—mind, I'm only surmising—it might be brought back by a child.'

'So it might,' said I; 'who knows?'

'Or—or a female?' suggested the sweep, in a speculative tone of voice.

I nodded.

'Which neither on 'em,' continued Mr. Tozer, 'might have 'ad anythink to do with its being took away. Well, you see, sir, it would be werry hard if the perlease turned disagreeable, and blamed it on to them as didn't deserve it.'

'Leave that to me,' said I; 'I'll take care no innocent person gets into trouble.'

'Then there was some—some money in the box, as well as letters, didn't you say, sir?' asked Mr. Tozer, looking down on the carpet.

'Yes,' I said; 'but I dare say that is already spent. *Shouldn't you think so?*'

'Well, Mr. Easel,' said the sweep, slightly raising his eyes from the floor, 'in course, no one can't say for certain, but since you ax my opinion, I should say it was uncommon likely. But it's the letters and the box that *you* want, ain't it?' he continued, quickly.

'The box and the letters,' I repeated; 'and remember that, unless they are restored before Tuesday night, no reward will be given.'

'Toosday night; werry good, sir. You can't say no fairer, and I'll do my best to circ'late that obserwashun,' said Mr. Tozer, taking up his greasy hat from the floor. 'Good artemnoon, sir. I wish yer luck.' And so saying, he took his departure.

* * * * *

A few days afterwards the detective called on me with my missing treasure. It had been brought, not to the police station, but to his own house by a 'female.' The lock had been wrenched open, but fortunately the rest of the box had escaped injury. McNabb, at my desire, purposely abstained from asking the woman any questions, and on finding the number of the letters to be correct, handed her a sovereign, according to promise.

Having thus literally fulfilled any obligation which existed on my part, I took the liberty of calling on Mr. Tozer and telling him of the soot-mark which I had found. I took care to add that if, after this discovery, any doubt had existed on the subject of his guilt, that doubt must have been removed by the manner in which the box had been brought back. I further told him that as I had pledged my word to take no further steps in the matter, the police would not interfere with him this time. But I denounced him as an impudent scoundrel, and strongly advised his amending his conduct for the future, lest he should come deservedly to the treadmill.

As for the McNabb, of course he had his 'honorarium,' though I must add that as far as my experience points, I should say, 'Every man his own detective' for the future.

And so endeth the legend of my 'Christmas Box.'

JACK EASEL.



AN ENGINE-ROOM STORY.

ON a cold frosty Christmas, a few years ago, I was a passenger on board the fine steamer 'Queen,' from London to —. The voyage is not a very long one; but we were several days at sea, and during that time I struck up pretty much of an acquaintance with the second engineer of the ship. I have always had a taste, rather imaginative than scientific, for watching the working of powerful machinery; the evenings were too cold to allow of my remaining long on deck; and I was often glad to exchange for a time the saloon stove for the bright glow of the boiler furnaces, and the company of the passengers for a chat in the engine-room with my friend the engineer. Ten o'clock in the evening, when it was his watch, generally found me seated by his side on the platform that ran around the tops of the cylinders, whence he could in a moment hear any word passed from the deck, had immediate access to the handles of the engines, could see the fire-doors and stoke-hole, with the glass gauges in front of the boilers; and even whilst chatting with me, could be constantly alive to the smallest escape of steam, or the least jarring or chirping sound which told to his practised eyes or ears that something about the machinery required lubrication or adjustment.

There was nothing very remarkable about my acquaintance, Angove: he was simply an honest, straightforward, intelligent, self-educated mechanic; one, in short, of a class very numerous among our steamboat engineers. He was about forty years of age, and had spent nearly half that time at sea, in many services and in all parts of the world. He had been in action on board a Brazilian steam-sloop; had nearly died from the intense heat in the engine-room of a Peninsula and Oriental boat in the Red Sea; had been wrecked in a West India mail steamer, and afterwards discharged from the service for a smuggling transaction, with which he vowed that he himself had really nothing to do; was at the time the late war broke out serving on board a Russian war-steamer, which of course he left as soon as possible; had served on board a river-boat on the Mississippi, and another on the Hooghly; and had seen many a strange event in these and other services, from the plain matter-of-fact point of view natural to his temperament and education.

On Christmas eve we were slipping

along fast under steam and canvas, with the wind and sea on the beam; and the ship, though not pitching much, was rolling a good deal. We had but few passengers on board, and of these four were solemnly playing a rubber, while the others were ill in their berths. There was evidently not much Christmas festivity to be expected in the saloon, so I came shivering off the deck, where I had been smoking a cigar in the moonlight, and seated myself in my accustomed place on the engine-room platform, enjoying the warm glow from the furnaces. Angove had just lit a cigar which I gave him, when a slight escape of steam from one of the valve stuffing-boxes arrested his attention. The platform on which we had our seat was on a level with the tops of the cylinders, with a railing nearly breast high between it and the engines; and to get at the stuffing-box in question, it was necessary, in order to avoid being struck by the bars of the parallel motion, to wait until the engine took her down stroke, and then vault in over the rail to the top of the cylinder cover, before she came up again. Taking a spanner, to screw down the gland, Angove awaited the proper moment, and vaulted over the rail; but at that instant the ship took a heavier roll than ordinary, his foot slipped on the greasy, sloping surface of the false cover, and he had the narrowest escape possible from being precipitated headlong among the working parts of the machinery. He saved himself just in time by catching hold of the cylinder cross-head; but this cross-head worked up to within half an inch of one of the deck beams; and before he could withdraw his hand the two were nearly close together; the smallest conceivable space of time longer, and his hand would have been crushed between them: such close work was it, indeed, that he actually felt the squeeze, and the skin was red with the pressure.

I know I was terribly frightened, and started up pale and horror-struck; but Angove finished his work coolly, vaulted out again over the rail, and seated himself at my side, a little pale, but perfectly calm and self-possessed, and smoked away his cigar as if nothing had happened.

'My dear fellow,' I cried, 'what a narrow escape! I thought it was all over with you.'

'Yes, indeed,' he said, 'it was close work! But, thank God, it is all right.'

A very small fraction of a second longer,' looking at his hand, 'and my power of using hammer and chisel wouldn't have been of much account.'

We sat for some minutes without speaking; both, no doubt, meditating on what had occurred: and then, full of the subject, I said—

'It must be very dangerous work, going about the engines in really bad weather?'

'Yes it is,' he said, 'especially in some engine-rooms; nearly as bad, I think, as it is for the sailors to go aloft. But I have always been very fortunate.'

'Did you never meet with an accident?' I asked.

'No,' he replied; 'but I was very near one once—a worse one perhaps than even this would have been—and yet it was not exactly an accident either.'

'What was it, then?' I asked.

'Well,' he said, 'it is a subject on which I don't much like to speak; and, indeed, I have never told the whole story to any one; but I think a sufficiently long time has now elapsed, and I may as well give it to you since you are pleased to say you like hearing my little adventures.'

'It was many years ago—when the Californian gold-diggings were attracting everybody's attention, that I went out as third engineer of a steamer from Panama to San Francisco. I liked the captain very much, and I had known him by sight before, though he didn't know me; for a short time previously he had several times come on board a ship to which I then belonged at New York, to see the captain, who was a friend of his. Once or twice he had brought off his wife and little daughter with him—such a sweet lady-like young woman, and such a dear little girl!—I recollect taking them down once and showing them the engines—and the lady appeared so fond of her husband! I wondered how he could leave them to come on this station, in that lawless time of gold-seeking. Our chief engineer, too, was a good sort of man, and one who knew his work well; the second wasn't a bad fellow either, though too fond of his glass; but the rest of the officers and crew were not pleasant shipmates. The ship was not a comfortable one to me in any respect, and I soon determined that my first voyage in her should be my last, though we had first-rate wages to induce us to stick by the ship at San Francisco, and not run away to the gold-diggings.'

'We arrived out safely, without any adventure; but we had to wait a long

time there before we could sail on our homeward voyage. Notwithstanding all precautions, a great many of our crew ran away, and it was impossible to replace them: indeed, the harbour was full of ships lying useless there for want of crews to take them away. But we had also another loss, and a great one, in our chief engineer. He had been ailing on the voyage out, and he died, poor fellow, whilst we were lying in the harbour. Our second was not exactly the person to take charge of the engines, being, as I have said, rather too fond of drink, and the captain, we heard, was trying all he could do to get some one in our chief's place. Macpherson, the second, was of course very indignant at this—but so it was.

'I should think we must have been quite two months at San Francisco before we were ready to sail again—for you must understand that we were not a regular packet on the station, but had been specially chartered for the voyage out—and we thought that we were going after all without any new chief engineer. We, in the engine-room, were pleased at this, for Macpherson was a good sort of fellow enough, except for that fault which I have mentioned, and a first-rate workman; but on the very last day before sailing, the captain, of whom we had seen but little for some time past, came on board with a person whom he introduced to the engine-room hands as their new chief.

'He was not the only new arrival on board. There were a few—very few—passengers; and a lady, who I heard, to my astonishment, was the captain's wife, whom he had married since we had been at San Francisco. Now, as I have already told you, I had seen his wife and little daughter but a short time before, so you may think how much I was surprised at seeing this other woman brought on board as his wife now. I was very much surprised at our captain, whom I had taken for a different sort of man; but it was all no business of mine, so I held my tongue about it. This new woman that he had now was very handsome, certainly, though of a bold, masculine style of beauty, and with such an eye! I thought I shouldn't exactly like her for a wife myself; though she was really handsome, and it was no wonder that any man should be taken up with her.

'Right or wrong, I form my opinions of people pretty quickly; and I didn't like our new chief. He was quiet and mild in his manners certainly—

wonderfully so for that time, in that part of the world—but there was a wild, dissipated, wicked look, if you understand me, in his eye, which seemed to me to tell that he could be very different if he chose. I could not help remarking to Macpherson, that I thought we had a rum one to deal with now; and he replied that he should like to know his history, for he guessed it was a strange one. One thing was evident to me from the first time he came into the engine-room—he was not a practical working engineer. That he knew something about engines was plain; and he gave his orders with decision, and without any apparent doubt of himself; but there was a theoretical rather than a practical twang about them, as if his knowledge of marine engines had been gained rather by study than by experience. His hands were too white and delicate for a man who had used the hammer, and chisel, and file much; and coming into the engine-room suddenly on the evening before we sailed, I found him doing some job at the vice which was fixed there—something for himself, I fancy, and not for the engines—and from the manner in which he handled his tools, it was plain that he was no workman. I set him down in my own mind for a civil engineer, who had come out to the diggings, had got a bad run of luck, and was glad to work his way home as best he could.

‘At length we were ready for sea, having taken on board a small cargo, and also some gold on its way to the States. We had beautiful weather down the coast, and for some time nothing unusual occurred. Macpherson and I kept watch and watch alternately, our new chief of course taking none: indeed he came very seldom into the engine-room at all; and, when he did, he interfered with nobody. He would just glance at the gauges, open a fire-door and look in, and feel the heat of the condensers; but he would make no remark, unless there was a little escape of steam, or anything of that sort which a child might notice. He seldom found fault with anybody; and very often, indeed almost every night, he used to send down grog to the stokers and trimmers on watch, so that they began to consider him a sort of sea-angel, and to wish that they could always have him for a chief. Our captain, too, appeared to think more of his wife than of the ship, and also seemed to me to be drinking pretty much; and Macpherson soon found that he might take his little drop when he liked,

having nobody to find fault with him, except myself, who was his subordinate. So, altogether, discipline became very lax, and except for the mates, who were blusterers of the genuine Yankee type, we were quite a happy family at sea. I could not help fancying, however, that it was all too good to last; and so it turned out.

‘We had got well down the coast, and I knew we were not far off the land, when one night—a fine night it was, but very dark—it was my watch below from midnight to four in the morning. When I say, “my watch below,” you know, sir, I do not mean my watch below, in the engine-room, but my turn to be off duty. Macpherson and I occupied as a sleeping cabin one of the deck-houses abaft the paddle wheel, in which were two bunks, one over the other, one his and the other mine. At eight bells—twelve o’clock you know—I called him, and he turned out as usual, and went to take charge of the engine-room; whilst I turned into my bunk and tried to go to sleep. Now to sleep close behind a paddle-box, with the wheel but a foot or two from your head, is, for those unaccustomed to it, and sometimes even for those who are used to it, rather a difficult operation, especially when the ship is rolling. There is a creak and a buzz, as your side rises with the roll; and a roar, and a bang, and a shock, and a splutter as your wheel is in its turn half buried in the sea; with a continual tremble and shake, never ceasing for a moment, which altogether render sleeping in such a position an art only to be acquired by long practice; and as I have said, not always to be depended upon even then. I can sleep as well as most people; and am not at all a particular man in such matters; but on the night in question, although there was not much sea on, I soon found that any attempt to get a sleep in my bunk was hopeless. I could not afford to throw away my four hours in thinking about it: so turning out again, without much delay, I went below to the engine-room, and crept into a snug little spot between the starboard cylinder and the forward bulkhead of the engine-room, which I had several times before, on our outward voyage, used for a similar purpose. I must describe the engine-room to you. It was very much like this one: the engines were side-levers like these; and the stoke-hole, with its fire-doors, was adjoining the engine-room, without any separation between. The cylinders were forward, about four feet from the bulkhead, and the boilers

and stoke-hole were aft. There was a platform, just like this, at the level of the tops of the cylinders, on each side of the engine-room, and across the forward part of it, close to the bulkhead; with ladders at the after-ends of the two side platforms leading down to the stoke-hole; and another at the middle of the part that went across, by which you descended to a narrow passage between the engines, where the starting-handles, &c., were placed: at the same part of the platform was the ladder which communicated with the deck. You will see from this that there was at the forward end of the engine-room, having the cylinders and ends of the engines on one side of it, the bulkhead on the other, and the cross platform for a roof, a space about four feet wide, and in length the whole width of the ship. The port side of this space was filled with tallow casks, oil cans, &c., for which there was not room in the store closet; but on the starboard side there was a nice snug little spot, kept tolerably cool, though so near the cylinders, by the draught of air from the deck, and, through some holes in the bulkhead, from the fore-hold. This snugger was approached by a narrow passage on the starboard side of the ship—for the ladders and the deck-pump prevented your getting in from between the engines, and the donkey engine was in the way on the port side; and you had to make a rush to get in, where you did, without a ducking from the starboard waste-water pipe through the ship's side, which was very leaky, so that there was generally a torrent of water falling down from it. But once in, with a bag of cotton wipings for a bed, and my jacket rolled up for a pillow, I could generally calculate on a comfortable snooze, without disturbance from the wheels or anything else. I am obliged to be so particular in my description, or you would never understand what I have to relate. In this favourite spot of mine, then, you will understand that I lay down, and in a very few minutes was fast asleep.

'I had not slept very long, when I awoke with a start, and with an uneasy consciousness that there was something unusual in the working of the engines. I leant on my elbow and listened. They were going much more slowly than usual, and there was a peculiar jerking style about their motion which seemed as if they were working expansively with high steam; and the well-known rushing sound in the steam-pipes, like the wind through a doorway, when the door is ajar, showed me

in a moment that they were closely "throttled,"—that is, that the valves in the pipes leading to the cylinders were partially closed, so as to check the flow of steam from the boilers to the engines. I saw, too, that there was a very bright glow from the furnaces, and that the fires were more than usually intense. I fancied, also, from the absence of the usual currents of air, except through the windsail and from the forehold, and the appearance of the lights and shadows, that the hatches over the crank gratings, and the companion leading to the deck were closed—a thing that was very unusual except in bad weather.

'I was about to creep out of my lair, to see what was the meaning of all this, when I heard persons in conversation in the passage between the engines, and almost close to where I was. By a slight movement I was able also to see them. One was our chief engineer, who had never before been known to be in the engine-room at this hour of the night: he had his hands on the injection handles, and was regulating the supply of water to the diminished quantity of steam passing through the engines. The other, with his back turned towards me, was a person whom I did not know at all. He appeared a slight, gracefully-formed young man, of middle height, dressed in sailor's clothes of a fine texture, and with the voice of a youth, rather than of a man. I should have gone out at once to see what was doing, but the first words I distinguished arrested my attention in a moment. It was the youth who said—

"How long before we shall leave the ship?"

"Not long now," replied the chief: "but we have nothing more to do, except to start when it is time."

"Are you sure the third engineer is all right?"

"Yes. He sleeps in one of the wheel-houses, and I have turned the key upon him. Dick is at the wheel; the rest of the watch on deck, and these smutty fellows are disposed of. We have lowered the boat all safe, and all is ready for a start."

"Then, why not go now?"

"No, we might still be discovered in time to spoil all. Let us wait till the last moment, and we shall be sure that we have got rid of the infernal ship and all that could ever give us trouble. But, by G—d," he said, with a glance towards the gauges, "there isn't much time to spare, either. The steam mounts quicker than I thought; it is at twenty-five already, and the water is all out of the gauges. Just step on

deck, and tell Dick we shall be off at once."

'The youth turned and ascended quickly to the deck; and the chief went to the stoke-hole, opened the furnace-doors, looked at the fires, and threw in some coals and tallow.

'I should make a bad hand at describing my feelings, and all that sort of thing; but I think you may imagine that the unaccountable appearance of a stranger in the ship—the intelligence that the watch both on deck and in the engine-room were disposed of—the knowledge that the steam was at twenty-five pounds to the inch, our usual working pressure being fifteen, and rapidly rising, with the safety-valves, of course, fastened down or very heavily loaded—the engines throttled of half their steam, the feed in the boilers very low, and the furnaces fed with oil and tallow, it was altogether enough to make one feel queer. The boilers were new and strong; but, for that very reason, when they did give way, the destruction would be the greater; and I expected soon a terrific explosion, which might probably send the ship to the bottom. I understood at once—indeed there was no room for doubt after what I had seen and heard—that the villains had by some means got hold of the gold on board; that they had either drugged or overpowered the watch, and that it was their intention to blow up the ship, and escape in the confusion; or to get away a little before hand, and trust to the explosion, which must inevitably follow to remove all proof of their crime and all dread of capture. I saw what it was; but I confess to you, sir, at the risk of being thought a coward, that I stood at first unable to think or act to any useful purpose. Had I been prompt and decided, now was my time to have acted while the stranger was on deck; but I own that I stood rooted to the spot, with shaky knees, with quivering lips, and with the cold, clammy perspiration standing on my forehead. I have often been in peril, but I never felt so unmanned, before or since, as I did then; and I verily believe that, had I been left alone, I should have allowed the ship, and the gold, and my own life, and the lives of all on board to take their chance, rather than venture out to face those desperadoes.

'But I had not the choice. The chief, after looking at the fire, and examining the gauges, crossed the stoke-hole to the other passage under the star-board platform, with the view probably of getting at some of the grease and

tallow that was stowed away close by where I had made my couch. I saw that I must now be discovered; but with the prospect of a struggle with one man singly, my courage revived, my limbs became steady, and the coward feeling left my heart. He groped his way slowly up the passage, and then made the rush which I have described, as necessary to avoid the water from the waste-pipe. This rush brought him close to me before he stopped, and we stood face to face. My eyes were accustomed to the dim light of the place, while his were yet dazzled by the bright glare of the fires; so that I could distinguish his features, while he was yet uncertain whether there was any one there but himself. I ought to have seized the opportunity, and attacked him at once, but I foolishly let the moment pass, and instead of acting promptly, I sung out, "Who is there?" In a moment his eyes lit up with a look of fierce intelligence; and with a suppressed exclamation, he sprang upon me. The suddenness of the attack made me start back; and, my foot being tripped up by the bag of cotton I used for a bed, we fell heavily to the deck together, I being undermost. His left hand was on my throat; and clutching my hair with his right, he, with a quick lift and jerk, moved my head to one side towards the engine. I did not resist the movement much, for I had not thought exactly where I was lying; but, oh, think what was my horror at the next instant to see directly over me, the end of the side lever descending, and not more than three feet above my head! By a violent effort I got out of the way just in time; but even then the cutter at the end of the lever grazed my forehead in its descent. The horror of my position seemed to give me for the moment preternatural strength, and I succeeded in rolling my antagonist over until I became uppermost; and then I struck him with my clenched fist two or three heavy blows on the face with such effect, that his hold of me relaxed, and I thought that I had stunned him. In a moment I gained my feet and fled; but I had been mistaken in fancying I had quieted my antagonist; he was nearly as quick as I was, and pursued me closely. I rushed through the passage by the side of the ship, across the stoke-hole, through the passage between the engines, and thence to the platform and up the ladder leading to the deck. The chief was close behind me, so that I dared not lose time by turning my head; and I remember how I heard his feet

slip as he crossed the iron floor of the stoke-hole directly after me. I tried to fling open the door of the companion, and gain the deck—I thought that my escape was certain. But oh, sir, I had no sooner touched the door than I found that it was closed, fastened on the outside. I looked down. The chief was standing on the platform at the foot of the ladder; he held a revolving pistol in his hand, and was then in the act of cocking it! There was no time for hesitation, and I flung myself right off the ladder upon him. He fired, but without having time to take aim, and I was not hit. With the force of my fall, we both rolled off the platform into the passage between the engines, the pistol being at the same time dashed from his hand. How we both escaped being crushed by the machinery I scarcely know; but so it was, and directly we were both on our feet again, and struggling through the passage on to the slippery stoke-hole floor.

‘Here, still grasping each other’s throats, we paused to take breath; and I saw then that Macpherson and the stokers, and trimmers of the watch were lying either dead or dead drunk about the side platforms and stoke-hole. I shouted as well as I could, but without avail; and then a thought flashed across me—the steam whistle! There was a handle by which it could be sounded from the engine-room. If I could but reach that, I must alarm all the ship, and we might yet be saved! But at that moment the companion was opened, and the youth, the chief’s accomplice, descended. He came down the ladder hastily; but he had no sooner turned and seen what was going on than he paused, as if frightened and irresolute how to act. The chief saw him as soon as I did, and sung out to him—

“The pistol! the pistol! There, between the engines!”

‘The youth picked up the pistol, and coming forward, presented it at me; but I could see, even in that moment, that he had omitted to cock it. He pulled at the trigger, but of course without avail. The chief saw, as I did, the cause of the failure. “Cock it, d—n you—cock it!” he cried out; and then I heard the click as the hammer was drawn back, and the chamber revolved. It was now or never for me. I am a Cornishman, sir; and, like most from that country, a little bit of a wrestler. I had regained my strength a little, and skill took the place of what was wanting. It was my only chance. So, quick as lightning, I gave the chief the “toe,” as we call it in our

country, and turned him over like a top towards the side on which the youth was standing. He fired at the same instant; but the sudden turn I gave my antagonist changed our positions, and the bullet, after inflicting a flesh wound in my arm, entered his body instead of mine. The youth gazed for a moment with a look of horror, and then, with a scream, threw herself on the body. At that same instant I saw who it was. It was no youth, but a woman, and our captain’s new wife. But I did not wait to speculate on this, for I saw that the fires must be drawn at once, and I had no strength left. I sprang to the handle and sounded the whistle. There was the well-known shrill shriek which could not fail to be heard throughout the ship; and I fell down fainting on the stoke-hole floor.

‘I remember little more that passed until I found myself in the hospital at Panama. The events of that night—my wound, and the want of medical attendance, for we carried no surgeon—had brought on an attack of fever, and I had been dangerously ill. I had been delirious, and when I did regain my consciousness, the events which had really happened were so mingled in my brain with the extravagant fancies of my delirium, that I found it difficult to distinguish the one from the other. I soon discovered, however, that people had been told I had been guilty of gross insubordination towards the chief engineer, and that he had been so maddened by passion as to fire his revolver at me; and that I, having gained possession of the weapon in the struggle which ensued, had shot him, to save my own life. Of course I denied this; but my ideas, and, no doubt my talk, were still so incoherent, that but little notice was taken of what I said. Soon the captain of the steamer came to my bedside, and begged and entreated me in the most earnest, the most piteous manner, to allow this version of the story to be believed. He said he had been bewitched by the charms and arts of that woman; and, believing that none of the crew knew he was already married, he had agreed to give her a passage, and had taken her on board with him as his wife. She had obtained from him, by pretending a playful womanish curiosity, a knowledge of where the gold on board was stowed, and how it could be got at; and this vile woman, with her accomplice and paramour (the villain whom he had foolishly engaged, at her recommendation, as chief engineer), and another man, also shipped at San Francisco, had

between them conceived and attempted to carry out that atrocious project in which they had been so nearly successful. The engineer's hurt had not been serious; and the captain said that he had connived at his escape with his accomplices as soon as the ship got into port. The woman, indeed, had not been seen in her disguise by any one but himself; for he had been first in the engine-room when the whistle sounded the alarm, and had managed somehow to get her out of the way unseen. "It would be useless now," he said, "to attempt to capture them;" and he implored me not to contradict the account he had caused to be circulated, and so cause his ruin, which would be sure to follow, should his owners learn the real truth of the story. He made the most solemn vows of repentance and amendment, and I believe he was truly sorry for his fault, as well as its consequences; but I was deaf to all

until he spoke of his sweet wife and his dear little girl, whom I had seen, as I have said, at New York. He said that his wife was near her confinement, and that he was sure, if she learnt the truth, the blow would kill her. Well, sir, at length I yielded, and agreed to confirm the account he had given. You may be sure that the crew, and especially Macpherson and the rest of the watch in the engine-room and on deck—who had been drugged by some liquor which the chief had given them—were not altogether imposed upon, and a hundred different versions of the story were flying about. But no one ever knew the rights of the affair—we were not in England, you know, sir, and it was a lawless time and a lawless part of the world. I returned to Europe as soon as I had recovered, and from that time to this I have never told anybody but you how it all happened.'

E. T. LIDDELL.

THE MAGIC PITCHER.

IT was once on a time, as the story-books say,
There lived in the Schwarzwald a Baron so gay,
So jovial and hearty, so fond of good cheer,
And he passed all his days there in hunting the deer:
His evenings he spent at his Schloss, where, I'm thinking,
But little went on besides eating and drinking:
And old chroniclers tell us—and they ought to know—
That the 'carrying-on' there were not *comme il faut*.
It was long, long ago—at a most remote date—
When the matter occurred which I have to relate;
It was long before days of madness and worry
Engendered by railways with Bradshaw and Murray;
Long before there were tables at which you might bet,
Or could lose half a fortune each day at roulette—
Or they made cuckoo-clocks and those horrid cigars,
Or the 'Führer' was written by Dr. Carl Schnars;
In short, long before we arrived at that line meant
By moderns whenever they talk of refinement.
The depths of the forest were marshy and sodden,
The trees were unhewn, and the grass was untrodden;
There was scarcely a hut or a human abode,
There was hardly a pathway, and much less a road!
Whilst the glades were so haunted with spirits of evil,
Or good little fairies, who played such vagaries—
With sprites ever tricky, and brownie and pixie—
Who could not be quiet, but made such a riot—
That the forest itself was a forest primeval!

There the Baron resided—I said this before—
And perhaps the digression you'll reckon a bore
(But I must introduce this little variety
To show his high *status* in foreign society).
Now he owned all the land there—a very good reason—
And lived in a castle ancient and bold,
With cellar beneath constructed to hold
Large vats filled with wine of number untold,
Which served very well to keep out the cold—
When his guests came to see him and hunt in the season.
'Twas hunting one day, that the Baron so gay,
And his friends who drank deeply at nights,
Each began to feel dry, and anxious to try,
Any liquor to set him to rights.
The Baron spoke up, as he drained off a cup,
And scowled at his friends, and he curst—
'I'll give yellow gold, or a butt of wine old,
To him who will quench me this thirst!'—
They gave him cold water—he roared like a lion—
It fizzed off his tongue as it would a hot iron;
They filled up the wine cup, filled higher and higher,
But poor Baron Fritz became dryer and dryer,
Till just as he thought he was going to expire,
There arose from the grass a most comely young lass,
Whose beauty and brightness none e'er could surpass.
As sweetest music her approach then heralded,
She looked like a picture Mr. Fitzgerald did,
With her long fair hair all rippling down,
Soft gauzy wings and a jewelled crown;
With eyes so blue and so wondrous bright,
They made Fritz wink with their brilliant light!
(The Baron tried hard then his fears to whistle down,
As light she swung on the finest of thistle-down.)
'I'm good Fairy Ripple,' she sang with a laugh;
'And bring you my pitcher and ask you to quaff;

It will moisten your throat and will brighten
your eye;
As long as you have it you'll never feel dry.
Drink, but not deeply, or some day you will rue
Receiving the pitcher I give unto you!
Then most sweetly she smiled, and, ceasing to
sing,
Soon flew out of sight on a dragon fly's wing.
Then Fritz quickly started, and gave a great
yawn,
And looked round for his friends, but found
they were gone;
Then thought he'd been dreaming, but as he
jumped up,
Saw sparkling beside him the gold-jewelled
cup.
He seized it at once, and he took a good
draught,
He sprang, and he danced, as he shouted and
laughed.
'Twas better than iced seltzer water and heck,
And cooler than licking a Wenham Lake
block;
'Twas finer than Clicquot, or soda and B.,
It stung the nerves better than strongest of
tea.
Baron Fritz, after drinking, hung the cup by a
chain
Round his neck, in case e'er he should want it
again,
And he very soon did so, for homewards he
rolled,
With his lips always touching that pitcher of
gold.
Said he, 'I'll amuse my guests over their
tipple
With the wondrous tale of the good Fairy
Ripple.'
(He found all the time to himself he'd been
talking,
O'er shoes, in the water so cold, he'd been
walking.)
Then he wished that his castle was somewhat
nigher,

And could not make out why the road was
not dryer—
Was really afraid that the water was higher—
When he heard a moan, and an awful groan!
And the Baron then found he was not alone!
A fierce gaunt Dryad, with tangled rough
ragged head,
He saw there, shaking his ugly old jagged
head:
A gnarled old face, a barky nose,
Branches for fingers, tendrils for toes;
Out of his forehead growing two trees,
To nod and sway in the evening breeze.
He shouted at Fritz, and then fiercely he
frown'd—
'Put down that pitcher, or you're sure to be
drowned!
O horror! Fritz started, for 'neath the moon-
gleam,
From his pitcher he saw there was flowing a
stream;
Then he felt that his blood was beginning to
freeze,
As the water came rippling up to his knees!
He tugged at the pitcher, 'twas piteous to see,
For the chain was entangled, he could not
get free!
Then reeling and staggering over the boulders,
He found that the water was up to his
shoulders.
In a moment he tripped in the current so fleet,
Next he stumbled and fell, and was borne off
his feet.
Sure a sturdy swimmer like Fritz cannot
drown,
But that pitcher is heavy, and weighs him
down.
The water closed o'er him and swept him
away,
As he thought he heard voices seeming to
say—
'Drink, but not deeply, or some day you will
rue
Receiving the pitcher I give unto you!
J. ASHBY STERRY.



CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE LONDON MARKETS.

LOSE observers of the habits and customs of the lower order of English workmen have recorded the singular facts that, as a rule, the Sunday is by them regarded not as an entire, but as a half holiday. Nay, cleanliness being a kindred virtue with godliness, it is indisputable that, as regards the forepart of Sunday, he is guilty of desecration, not out of neglect and carelessness, but deliberately and by design, for, whereas all the working days of the week he sits down to breakfast with a visage the brighter for acquaintance with soap and water, and a head of hair reclaimed from nocturnal tangle, the sabbath breakfast-time finds him at his own hearth grimy and unkempt. He can afford to be untidy. His time is his own, and he may do just what he pleases with it. Not that it pleases him to wear a dirty face (no man can accuse him of that: he washes his face, and arms, and hands, every day, his feet once a fortnight, or oftener, if a cold necessitates their immersion in

hot water, and never a summer passes but he has a dip in the Serpentine or the fourpenny swimming baths); but, the fact is, his every-day matutinal ablutions are in a degree compulsory. It is one amongst the 'shop' rules, and an infringement of it is visited by a fine of twopence—and yesterday's smut on his nose and yesterday's stubble still adorning his chin, are indubitable symptoms, that to-day he calls no man his master. Through the Sunday forenoon—although, if his every-day employer was to say, 'Jones, if you like to bring that parcel up to the house, there's half a crown for your trouble,' he would reject it with scorn—he employs himself domestically, and works like a nigger. He will sole-and-heel Polly's boots, put in broken windows, make good defective drainage in the rear of his premises, 'set' a copper, or dig whole rods and perches of garden ground until his blue-ribbed shirt reeks with perspiration, and all with the completest cheerfulness, and until it is notified to him that dinner will be ready in twenty minutes.

From that moment he is a changed man. In that announcement breaks on him the first glimmering of Sunday dawning. With a face growing each moment more sober he puts away his tools, and straight retires to the privacy of his chamber, from which he emerges just in time to sharpen the carving-knife for an attack on the shoulder of mutton that Joe, the eldest born, has fetched from the bakehouse. But how changed a man is he from the cobbler, or the digger, or the copper-setter of half an hour ago! His blue-ribbed shirt is exchanged for a white one with a rigorous stand-up collar; his face is clean and shiny, his chin is as smooth as a baby's, and he has oil on his hair. The time of day has begun when he should 'bring up his children in the way they should go,' and he sets about it with an uncompromising air, that would have won for him a name in the bygone times of Praise-God-Barebones. With strictest impartiality, as regards crackling and gravy, he charges the seven plates ranged on either side of the table, and behind each of which appears a wistful face and a pair of eyes that by anticipation have already eaten up every scrap of the smoking ration, and then he—father Jones that is—raps the table with the buckhorn haft of the carving-knife, and seriously commands Joe to say grace; and glibly as one who has it already at his tongue's tip, and whose mouth waters for what is to follow, Joe complies. His ejaculation

of the last syllable of the word 'thankful,' that concludes the prayer, is like the application of the match to the touch-holes of a row of cannon as regards the dumb waiters behind the charged plates, and instantly they fire away. Father, too, he fires away, but still preserves a severe eye for the proprieties of the Sunday dinner-table. 'Is it proper to eat your Sunday dinner with your fork wrong side up'ards, Maria?' 'Is that the manners they learn you at Sunday-school, John! keep your elbows off the table, sir.' 'If I have to tell you about that chawing noise again, Amelia Mary, you go into the back kitchen, miss. I must send to your Sunday-school, and tell 'em to set you a text to learn against such awful manners.' Dinner over, Joe, the grace-sayer, returns thanks. The children go to Sunday-school, and father turning down his shirt-sleeves (which have been tidily tucked back behind his elbows during the carving process), puts on his Sunday black coat, charges his Sunday long pipe, and composes himself clean and Christianly to smoke, while Joe reads the latest murders, forgeries, and bigamies, out of Lloyd's 'penny weekly.'

The Jones above quoted, who is but a type of ten thousand, is equally eccentric in his observation of other high holidays and festivities. Christmas Eve, for instance. His Christmas purchases must be sanctified by season in the extremest sense of the term. It is idle your preaching to Jones that daylight is the time for marketting—that cheats thrive by lamplight—that hurrying, and crowding, and squeezing are fatal to bargaining, that yellow cow-meat looks ruddy and fair as the best, seen by the light of flaming gas. He is ready enough to believe it on ordinary occasions, but on this special occasion he turns a deaf ear. It may be endeavoured to explain this apparent eccentricity of Jones's by the fact that Christmas Eve is, as a rule, a wages-receiving time, and that it is really dusk and 'eve' before Jones reaches home. This is true as far as it goes, but really it applies scarcely at all to the case. Jones does not depend on the earnings of the previous few days for his annual banquet of banquets. He 'saves up' for it by means of a shop money-club or otherwise, and has the cash in hand in good time, to make his purchases two days previous to Christmas if he had a mind.

But he has no mind; Christmas Day falling on a Tuesday, he would no more think of laying in his stock of Christ-

mas dinner provision on the previous Saturday, than he would of retiring to rest on Christmas Eve without having a lusty 'stir' at the pudding stuff in the pan. Beef so bought, would not be 'Christmas' beef. He knows as well as any man that the poultry for Christmas consumption are immolated and exposed for sale several days before the festival, and he cannot be blind to the fact that if he took a quiet stroll to the rendezvous of the goose and turkey merchants on the evening before Christmas Eve his opportunities of choice would be more extended, and as likely as not he would save a shilling in purchase money; nevertheless he would scorn to avail himself of such advantages. He has friends coming to dinner, and he is the last man in the world to treat them shabbily. With what countenance could he reply to the inquiry of a guest who, with the privileged familiarity of an old acquaintance, might require to know when and where the bird was purchased? It would scarcely be worth his while to tell a falsehood about it, but how could he find words to confess that it was not a Christmas goose at all, having been bought 'last week.' His character for joviality and hospitality would suffer from that moment. A suspicion would creep into the breast of each guest that the dinner was one contrived on economical principles. Whether it were true or no, when the mince pies appeared, the pie-shop in the High Street would be privately assigned as their birthplace, and the berry brownness of the hostess's pudding, while it was audibly commended and its complexion ascribed to natural richness, in secret would be attributed to some of the penny-a-pocket colouring trash manufactured by that great champion of the washing-tub and deadly enemy of *pulex irritans*, Fiddler Dozensticks. It wouldn't do at all. Very possibly evidence of their dissatisfaction might not be found in a falling off of the appetite of the guests, but it would be talked of afterwards, undoubtedly.

And in case that Jones reading these lines should imagine that I am holding up this weakness of his to ridicule, let me hasten to set myself right in his eyes. Your weakness, Jones, is laudable, proper, and I have a great mind to say Christian. You act on the simple belief—although like many another Christian belief of yours, you are content to enjoy it in your heart's warm depths and without declaring it from the summit of an upturned tub—that the season of Christmas Eve is a sancti-

fying season, and that to buy and prepare for the feast during the hallowed time, is like asking a blessing on it. You don't think of this, Jones, as you are cheapening a turkey or investing twopence in horse-radish as a garnish for your roast beef (how is it that you never eat horse-radish at any other time of year, Jones?), but reverence for the glad season is in you, and you are governed by it in all your actions. The good influence shines in your face, Jones, as you may convince yourself if you will take a peep at it in the draper's plate-glass, as you wait outside for your good lady who is proudly within the shop investing that unexpected three-and-sixpence of yours in a new cap with cherry bows. Nay, Mr. Cynic, you are quite wrong when you cry 'boosh! twaddle! cant!' You never will convert me to your opinion that the cheerful serenity of Jones's countenance on this particular evening is due not to any sort of 'mystic influence,' but simply to Jones's rare prospect of a feed off turkey and rich pudding, and a merry evening of pipes and grog to follow. I don't deny that Jones is a man with an animal appetite, and with a hankering after the fleshpots, and that the weight of the viands with which his basket is crammed is considerably mitigated by the buoyant properties of much of his soul there too. But you must know that Jones has bought other goods than will come to the spit or the pot. He has the worth of threepence in holly and the same in mistletoe. You may see that he has, for there it dangles by the side of his basket. And there, I am landed high and dry again on the ground on which I take my stand, Mr. Cynic, when you broke in with your unpleasant observations. How is it that Jones incommodes himself by carrying home that bulky, prickly bush, when he has so much else to carry? You know—I know—everybody knows, that holly and mistletoe has been seen hanging in the shops of the greengrocers for a week past—it has been hawked and bawled about the streets by costermongers ever since last Wednesday. Why then did not Jones, since he must spend his money in such nonsense—why didn't he make his holly purchase any day as he came home to dinner or returned at night any time during the past week? Why! for the best of all reasons—he didn't believe in holly or mistletoe till this evening. He has seen lots of it about, but he had no mind for it—no more than he would for plucking green apples growing within reach. He is

glad to see so fair a prospect, but ripe fruit for his money. Holly, with him, is not ripe until this 'eve.' The ruddy berries have now an interest for him they possessed not in the morning. Had he, then, by accident, pricked his hand with the holly thorns, he would probably have exclaimed 'blow' or 'bother' it, or may be—for he is a hasty man and not over choice of words when put out—he would have used a stronger expletive than either; but should such a calamity befall him now, I'd wager as much spirits as would serve to make Jones's snapdragon to-morrow, that he bears the scratch without the use of any naughty words whatever. You may laugh, Mr. Cynic; perhaps I know Jones better than you.

If any one doubts whether Christmas-eve marketing is an institution amongst the poorer sort of people, let him go to Leadenhall, or Newgate, or Newport, or Spitalfields, especially the two former, at the time in question. Take Newgate Market. One night a week—on a Saturday night—some business is done by gaslight, but by comparison not more than a penny to a pound with the amount of trade done there on Christmas Eve. Barter is not at a standstill all through the day, but it is strictly confined to big and little meat merchants. Ordinarily betwixt these two classes—the consignees and salesmen, and the shopkeeper who comes there for his goods, there exists a comfortable amount of cordiality; money and meat change hands smoothly, and all is harmony and content. But on the day before Christmas Day it is slightly different. Once a year the wholesale ones of the market find it profitable to go into the retail trade, and the regular retailer very naturally does not like it. He sulks and grumbles at the wholesale one's prices. The wholesale one, however, takes his unkind remarks in perfect good-humour. 'Never mind about five and eight being a cruel price,' he says; 'if you don't like to give it, you may leave it—that's the figure; it'll fetch it and a good deal more for the trouble of cutting up between this and twelve o'clock. They'll be swarming here like flies soon as the gas is lit.'

By 'they' he means the Christmas-eve marketers, and he is quite correct in his prognostication. By the time the gas is lit the market is 'laid out;' the covered ways are roofed and arched with meat, the narrow lanes are hedged with it; there are groves of pork, thickets of mutton, and, allowing four of the huge quarters to every bullock,—an ordinary and reasonable allowance

—more animals of that kind than in life could have found browsing on Mitcham Common. All cuts of prime parts too. At ordinary times are freely exposed for sale every part of a beast, from his tail to his snout; you may see the heads of sheep and sheep's 'trotters,' and heels of the bovine species in heaps hip high, the tails of oxen in bunches, and the intestinal parts of sheep, pigs, oxen, and calves burdening by the hundred-weight mighty hooks screwed into posts and beams. There is none of this on Christmas-eve; all is cleanliness and propriety. There is sawdust on the market stones and white cloths on the butchers' boards, and clean aprons and sleeves on the butchers' selves, and the butchers are rosy and the meat is rosy, and the gas spouts out with a jolly hum. There are three or four hole-and-corner taverns attached to the market. One of them, a low-crowned-looking edifice, the red-curtained doors of which are approached by three downward steps—a greasy, murky-looking hostel enough in general, but this evening all alive and beaming with extra gas-jets, and holly festooning the frowsy ceiling, and a big bunch of mistletoe, impaled to the middle post behind the bar to which the 'Old Tom' tap is attached, and against which the barmaid leans and chats with the customers in the intervals of business. 'Egg-hot from five till twelve' is the legend on the wall, and it being now five and past, frequently the red-curtained door swings to and fro, and with watering mouths sly butcher men slip in, and with satisfied mouths sly butcher men slip out, brushing their lips with their blue sleeves, and hurrying back to their stalls. They'd nap it if their masters caught them at it, only the best of it is, the masters take care *not* to catch 'em at it, so long as they take no more than is good for them, knowing the sort of evening's work they have before them.

And now the trade begins. Swarming in at the lanes and alleys come the buyers, in some few cases singly, but in pairs, as a rule, man and wife; and the number of their children may be estimated with tolerable accuracy from the size of the market-basket the latter carries—hundreds of them, thousands of them, until there is scarcely elbow room, and for safety the butcher men carry their knives, when not in use, in their mouths.

All very well, but it must be confessed that Newgate Market or Leadenhall are not, undoubtedly, the best places to purchase the primest and

cheapest. Jones is in this respect no weaker than his well-to-do brother; we are all alike, all anxious to fill our little tin pots at Niagara. If I want a pen'orth of plums I prefer them out of a bushel; if I have fifty pounds to bank, I lodge it with the Grand Westminster and Middlesex, capital seventeen millions. So it is with Jones and his wife. They have ten shillings to spend in butchers' meat, and they must needs hanker after the 'wholesale.' Any well-conditioned bullock is capable of supplying four times more sirloin than they are likely to want, but they prefer to pick their sirloin out of the produce of a hundred and fifty bullocks. There is no denying, Mrs. Jones, that you are a tolerable judge of meat, and may save a penny a pound by coming here—perhaps three halfpence, and so you ought, considering that you have trudged a mile and a half, had the crown of your bonnet stove in by collision with a meat-tray, and suffered agonies from the trampling of hob-nailed boots on your corns. How much better now it would have been to have gone quietly to Wiggins, who is not extensive in trade, but invariably civil and obliging, and given him your Christmas custom. It would have been better for various reasons. In the first place, you are well acquainted with Wiggins, and stand in no awe of him. If he asked you tenpence a pound for sirloin, and you thought that ninepence was a plenty for it, you would have no scruples about telling him so to his head, and declining to purchase unless he bated; but would you dare do as much by Silverside and Co.? The meat merchants who are in such a tremendous way of business make no more of your purchase of sixteen pounds of beef than Wiggins would of your demand for two pen'orth of suet! That in the first place; and then, pray, how about your knowledge of the arithmetic of wholesale meat-dealing? You may readily enough comprehend what a joint will cost, the price per pound of which is ninepence or ninepence halfpenny, but when the talk is of 'six and four' and 'five and eight,' it is questionable if you are not somewhat abroad. You may have some inkling of the fact that the figures mentioned represent the price required for a stone of eight pounds of the joint you have fixed on; still your bating tactics are thrown altogether out of gear, and whether to bid 'five and sevenpence' or 'five and twopence,' you have not the least idea. The probability is that you will yield without a struggle, or allow the bargain to escape you, while you

turn away to reckon how many eight-pences there are in five and fourpence.

But flatter not thyself, good Jones, because of your scholarship in figures that it only requires you to undertake the meat buying, and all will go well. You know all about 'six and eight' and 'five and four,' but you don't know everything. Pardon me, Jones, if I tell you that your great weakness lies in your prodigious confidence in your strength of mind, in your sound and cool judgment, and your complete invincibility to trade tricks and dodges of every manner and kind. 'I know—every one knows,' say you, 'how women are gammoned and wheedled by shopkeepers; they should have men to deal with; I'd like to see the butcher who would come the old soldier over me!'

Take the market-basket, Jones, mix in the crowd this blessed Christmas Eve, and you shall see all that you ask. You silly fellow! do you imagine that you are the first Jones that ever came to Newgate Market? As there is one bait for roach, and another for chub, and a third for gudgeon, so is there ways of angling for customers. The butcher before whose shop you pause, my good Jones, has already 'taken your measure,' as the saying is. He sees the independent manner in which your hands are thrust into your trouser-pockets, and the determination not to be imposed on or wheedled, visible in every line of your expressive countenance, and so far from being intimidated thereat, he regards you as one of the easiest of victims. He would rather deal with three of your sort than with one of your good lady's any day in the week, but on a Christmas Eve especially. With the air of a man who knows what meat should be, you cast your eye along the rows of ribs and sirloins, and presently he catches your eye. He doesn't rush out on you, however; he preserves his calmness and nods towards you as recognising in you an old and worthy customer. That is your impression, and meanly availing yourself of his apparent mistake—he is in an extensive way and highly respectable—you nod affably in return. He comes forward in a friendly way, and says, 'Good evening, sir; selecting your Christmas roast?' just as though it was a matter of course that you should come to his highly respectable establishment to select it.

'Well, yes, I was thinking about it, Mr. Butcher,' says you, in a patronising sort of way.

'Let us see, then; you don't like it over fat, if I recollect, sir (as though

you had dealt with him for years).

'What do you say to that cut, now?'

'How much?'

'Oh, well, we won't have a dozen words about price—my six and four. Weigh this, Jim, carefully.'

'One of the best butchers in England, Sarah,' you remark to Mrs. J——, as, having paid for your eighteen pounds of beef, you walk off with it. 'Very gentlemanly fellow, too, as you must have observed.'

'There's a good bit of bone in it, Joe, isn't there?'

'Of course there is—you can't have good meat without, and this is first-class.'

Let us hope so, Jones, for truly Mr. Butcher has 'come the old soldier' over you, making you pay for 'soft soap' at the rate of a penny a pound in that two stone two pounds of sirloin.

JAMES GREENWOOD.

CHRISTMAS DECORATION.

‘How DOES IT LOOK?’

NEATH the frosty sky sounds, sweet and clear,
 The joyous music of Christmas bells,
 Onward borne by the breeze more near,
 Blest is the tale their melody tells!
 Nature is wrapp'd in her shroud of white,
 Cold without is the evening air;
 See from yon windows there shines a light,
 Happiness, warmth, within are there.

Lustrous holly and mistletoe glisten
 In gay festoons from the dark oak wall,
 Sweet young voices with laughter,—listen,—
 Wake the echoes of Elmsley Hall.
 Ivy and laurel fitfully gleam,
 Daintily placed by a fair young hand,
 Lit by the flame with its ruby beam,
 Closely with critical eye now scanned.

‘How does it look? is it decked aright?
 Is yon garland there as it ought to be?’
 The holly glows bright in the glad firelight,
 The wreaths of laurel are fair to see:
 The circlets of ivy gracefully twine
 Round the mirror, like cloudwreaths round a star.
 The mistletoe berries as silver shine—
 There is something else that is fairer far.

‘How does it look?’ ’Tis a sweet young face;
 Eyes that are gentle, so soft, so pure;
 Full of each tender, maidenly grace,
 Lit with a look, though gay, demure!
 A face that shines forth like an April day,
 Where a sigh and a smile together vie:
 The smile is victor, and yet one may
 Know that beneath there lurks the sigh.

‘How does it look?’ Long leagues away
 Some one sits in the evening gloom
 Musing alone; his fancies stray
 To one much-loved face, to a well-known room.

‘How does it look?’ that smooth young brow,
 Those soft blue eyes which the teardrops dim:
 Does she not think of the wanderer now?
 Are not her thoughts away with him?

POETRY IN THE PARLOUR;
Or, Twelfth-Night Exercises.

SCENE I.

A Drawing-room. A clean hearth; a bright fire, and good lights. A round table, at which, sitting, and variously employed, are

Dramatis Personæ.

PAPA.

MAMMA.

EFFIE, *stat.* 15.

MINNIE, *stat.* 10.

BERTIE, *a young rascal from Eton, stat.* 14.

MISS PRINCE, *Governess, stat.* * * * *

MINNIE. Papa dear, are we to have a cake on Twelfth Night?

PAPA. I think not, Min; it will cost a guinea or more; and we ought to spend a guinea on something more lasting than a cake, and such trashy characters as the pastrycooks sell.

BERTIE. Better than no character at

all, father. (*Papa gives Bertie a box on his ears with the newspaper.*)

MAMMA. But, my dear, you promised the children a treat.

PAPA. I know I did; but a black draught so often follows a rich cake, as to render the title 'treat' very questionable.

MAMMA. But we have some young friends coming; and it will be so strange not to have a cake, and characters, and all that.

PAPA. Well, as you like; but I'll tell you what I propose in addition—

BERTIE (*interrupting*). Oh, don't let us have any arithmetic, governor!

PAPA (*making another lunge*). You had better keep out of my reach, sir! You shall each of you write a little poem; and the author of the best shall receive a beautiful book of some sort.

EFFIE. Oh, papa dear, how nice!

BERTIE. A prize poem. Oh, my eye!

MINNIE. Of course, papa, I stand no chance.

PAPA. Yes you will, Min, as the prize will not be awarded for the merits of the poem, *per se*, because in that case some of us elders might carry it off; but the reward shall be given in consideration of merit and age.

BERTIE. Oh, of course, one of the gurls will get it! they're dragons at verses, only they don't scan.

PAPA. If you write gurl instead of girl, your chance will be excellent, Bertie.

MAMMA. But who is to be umpire?

~ ~ ~

EFFIE. Oh, you, mamma dear!

PAPA. No; both your mamma and myself intend to compete.

BERTIE. Crikey! what fun! You must both be weighted for the colts to have a chance.

MAMMA. I fear my days are over for verse making; but I'll do my best.

PAPA. And Miss Primer will be adjudicator.

MISS P. With all my heart; so lose no time, young people, and have your manuscripts ready by Twelfth Night; and I will decide according to the best of my judgment.

EFFIE. I know what I shall write upon.

BERTIE. Most likely on paper, Eff.

EFFIE. Be quiet, Bertie, you great goose.

MAMMA. Well, I cannot say what my subject will be; so Effie, at least, has the start of me.

MINNIE. Mamma dear, I don't know what I shall write about; and I think I

would rather have the twelfth cake, and ask riddles.

MAMMA. Papa says we may have cake and characters as well, Min; so do your best, dear, and see whether you cannot make a tenth little muse. But now no more talking, but to pen, ink, and paper.

SCENE II.

Same drawing-room. Twelfth Night.

PAPA, MAMMA, EFFIE, MINNIE, BERTIE, and MISS PRIMER sitting round a table, each with MS., excepting MISS PRIMER. Time, early in the evening, before visitors arrive.

MISS P. (*to Papa*.) Now, sir, if you please, you first. We are all ready; will you read your poem?

PAPA. Here it is. I have written twelve Twelfth Night characters, in humble emulation of those exquisite verses which pastrycooks sell, to be drawn with their cakes.

BERTIE. 'Twelve Twelfth Night characters, by not even the twelfth part of a knight,' wouldn't be a bad title, father.

PAPA. Not amiss, Bertie. Now be silent while I read.

KING.

A slip of paper makes thee King to-night—

A slip of pen hath sometimes equal might

To loose a diadem, or shake a throne;
As oft events throughout the world have shown.

But Fortune gives to thee, with hand more fair,

Both crown and character—conjunction rare.

The first, when end our revels, fades away;

But keep the other for a rainy day.

QUEEN.

Hail, gentle monarch of our festive scene;

Yes, reign and hail, for thou art chosen Queen!

Grace, dignity, and love unite in thee;

And, like to Phospor rising o'er the sea,

Thou casteth on our rippling fun to-night

A glow of beauty and a smile of light;

But, oh! far better still than crown or throne,

The largest slice of cake is all thine own.

COUNT CROESUS.

For every hundred pounds—oh, happy wight!—

The world accords you some rare virtue bright.

For every virtue (take the money thence)

It speaks at best with cold indifference.

Worth is forgotten, intellect gives place;

For mind, without a banker, is disgrace.

Then, happy Croesus, count thy golden store—

'Twill purchase all things—and a little more.

LOUISA L'ALLÈGRO.

Thou art as gay, as sun in May
When shedding light, through blossoms white;

The daisies sweet, spring at thy feet;
At sight of thee, on hawthorn tree,

The linnet warbles merrily.
Thou sure wert born, when laughing morn

Casts o'er the world, a light of gold;

When dew on stems, like pendant gems,
Reflect the ray, of waking day,

And songsters gush a roundelay.

The May-bud's mouth, which nothing loath

To Zephyr's kiss, is tempting bliss;

And vermeil hips,* are roses' lips

Which seem to say, yes, taste you may,
But sweeter thou, tho' sweet are they.

And life to thee, is constant glee.

Thou laughest forth, a world of mirth;

And mischief tries, within thine eyes

To look demure, but out *will* pour,

And only breaks in brightness more!

BETSEY BLUE-STOCKING.

Pretty blue-belle lispings things

Brought to thee on learning's wings.

Have a care, thy dainty lip

Framing Greek is sure to trip.

Speaking Latin puts thee out—

Lips were made to kiss and pout.

Locke and Euclid! these you read!

Oh, it is too bad indeed!

The only locks which thou should'st know

Are those which o'er thy shoulders flow.

The only use of Euclid's lore

Is to make thee *angle* more:

So try a better, warmer art,

Burn thy books, and light my heart.

PRISCILLA PENSEBOSO.

Oh, queenly lady, lovely maiden thou!

Why is abstraction seated on thy brow?

Thy years are few—then why hath fruit of thought

A tone so mellow from reflection caught?

Why is the harvest of self communing
Not in the autumn garner'd, but in spring?

What canker in the bud, what hidden ill

Can turn to tragedy life's vaudeville,
And change a Sylphide to a tragic queen?

Sweet maiden, answer me; what can it mean?

'It simply means,' quoth she, 'a horrid cold

Hath strangled Mirth within its clammy fold.'

BARON MEDLEVAL.

'Who waits without? quick, sirrah,
ruby wine;

The foaming tankard, and the unctuous chine.'

(A dapper waiter enters at the sound,
And sandwiches and negus carries round.)

* The wild rose bears the hip, although
Chaucer has it—

'And sweet as is the bramble flower,
That beareth the red hip.'

'Fill high the bowl, and in the purple
spring
Dip deep your lips, and nose, and
everything.'
(A pretty mouth just sips the mixture red,
A sandwich nibbles, or a cake instead.)
'What ho, there, music! bid young
Blondel sing
The roundelay which woke the cap-
tive king.'
(Thereat a melody for dancers flows,
And waltzes tempt a sympathy of toes.)

SARAH SIRYL.

Alas, and alack! the stars I'll back
To tell you true, that, maiden, you
Are doomed to see, your husbands
~~live~~
All die off, with a wheeze and a cough.

Ha! ha! pretty jade, thy destiny's
made;
Hesperion shines, and phantom lines
Come and are off, and the warp and
woof
Have a motley make, and anon they
~~take~~
Form so shy; yet I can spy,
Maiden, for thee, husbands three,
A large familie, and no more.

SIR PEREGRINE PUNSTER.

Horrid propensity, making all sense a
lie,
Punsters and pickpockets are of a
clan;
Be sure, my good company, he wilt soon
stump all ye;
Settle the varlet as soon as you can.

Oh! a rascally pun
Is the natural son
Of a bad sort of fun,
Who presumeth to sit
At the table with wit—
A double-edged tool
Most used by a fool;
A double pretence
To humour and sense;
But sense it divides
And humour it hides.

Send him to Jericho, whether he will
or no;
Give him a whipping as rogue or a
rake.
Cast round him manacles, and let the
~~man he calls~~
Bind him with—oh! there's a pun by
mistake.
See the necessity, of letting charity
Guard us from errors we're ready to
blame;

While at the moment we, sent him to
Coventry
For crime he committed—our sin was
the same.

MISS PRENEZ-GARDE.

The bee which roves from bud to
flower
At eve returns with treasures sweet;
And sinks within his waxen bower,
Laying store for future treat.

But the blossoms which deliver
All their honey and perfume,
Soon discover that a giver
May for nought give all its bloom.

And seeing this, they watch their trea-
sure
Henceforth far more guardedly;
And fondly think the prudent measure
Is to prove his constancy.

But when the yellow thief discovers
 Petals closed 'gainst his return,
 Away he flies at once to others,
 Who the harm have yet to learn.
 Thus, dear maids, when rogues are
 roving,
 Purse your pretty mouths in scorn;
 And only keep the sweets of loving
 For the constant chosen one.

SIR HEU! EPIGRAM.

Says Robert to Richard, you steal all
 my wit;
 Says Richard, you steal all my brains;
 Says Sir Epigram, near—and not a bad
 hit—
 What matters? for neither thief gains.

SIR NORMAN NONSENSE.

Linda, dear Shammoney, how can I
 speak
 The love which consumes me alway;
 I'm so thoroughly scorched whenever I
 seek
 My affection for you to pourtray,
 That my paper's in danger, so is my
 lyre—
 My passion for you is so very like fire.
 Linda, dear Shammoney, 'twas in the
 ruin,
 Awalking the cliff that we met.
 To keep off the shower, I held up my
 cane,
 But we both got uncommonly wet.
 But what did I care, for thy beautiful
 smile
 Made me believe the sun shining the
 while.
 Linda, dear Shammoney, no spot on
 earth
 Resembles dear Bognor; for here
 My sighs and my love were twins at a
 birth,
 And you, sweet, you nourished the
 pair.
 So I think we may troth take for better
 or worse,
 Since you've already proved a most ex-
 cellent nurse.

PAPA (*taking off his spectacles*).
 There, children, what do you say to my
 Twelfth Night characters?

EFFIE. Oh, papa dear, I hope I shall
 not draw Sir Norman Nonsense or
 Sarah Sibyl!

BERTIE. Some of your rhymes, father,
 are uncommon weak. I should have
 had a hundred lines of Virgil for such
 as 'off, and woof;' 'discovers, and
 others;' 'company, and stump all ye.'

MINNIE. Bertie, be quiet. The cha-
 racters are beautiful; and I'd rather
 draw Louisa L'Allegro than Queen.

Miss P. The word is l'allègro, my
 dear, not allègro.

PAPA. You're right about some of the
 rhymes, Bertie; but what think you of
 'place, and pass;' 'flesh, and dish;'
 'state, and treat;' 'drink, and feast;' of
 a certain poet named Dryden; or
 'sought, and vault;' 'place, and glass;'
 'forbear, and war;' 'slip, and deep,' of
 not an obscure author called Addison?*

BERTIE. Two wrongs don't make a
 right, father. But I beg pardon,
 mamma's carriage stops the way. Now
 for something stunning.

MAMMA. I fear my poem is too sen-
 timental for such a graceless boy as
 you, Bertie; but such as it is, here it is.

TO MY DAUGHTER EFFIE.

I.

A verse I write for thee, my darling
 child,
 To wish thy life may gently ripple
 on;
 Thou now art pretty blossom undefiled,
 But fruit is garnered when the bud
 is gone;
 And if the bud and blossom be but
 pure,
 The fruit will ripen—virtue to its core.

II.

A mother's eye is thy best guiding star,
 For all her wishes are enshrined in
 thee.

BERTIE (*interrupting*). Pleasant for
 me and the rest!

PAPA. Bertie, I'll send you out of the
 room if you interrupt again.

BERTIE. All serene, governor.
 How oft she wafts a prayer to regions far,
 That God alone may mould thy des-
 tiny.
 And he will listen to a mother's prayer,
 If Effie be as good as she is fair.

BERTIE. Whew!

III.

But not of beauty would I make my
 theme,
 For, like an iris in a summer shower,
 It only lasts while plays the sunny
 beam,
 And glows and dies within a golden
 hour.
 But virtue ever shines without the sun;
 For virtue, Effie, in itself is one.

IV.

I do not wish thee pleasures too intense,
 Their brightness brings a shadow
 with them all;
 But I would ask for thee that sober
 sense,
 Of joys serene, whose little ebb and
 fall,

* These, and more curious rhymings
 still, constantly occur in Dryden's transla-
 tions, and in Addison's essays.

Mark but the onward course of life and
peace,
Whose hours grow brightest as the
sands decrease.

BERTIE. A-men.

EFFIE (*throwing her arms round her
mamma's neck*). Oh, mamma dear, what
beautiful lines! I am sure I will do
my best to deserve them.

BERTIE (*sotto voce*). Gammon!

MISS P. Now, Miss Effie—it's your
turn. What subject have you chosen?

EFFIE (*timidly*). It's called 'Love
and Death.' Bertie cut an advertise-
ment out of the 'Times,' and asked me
to write upon it.

BERTIE. By George! if she hasn't
taken me seriously. A man and his
wife died on the same day; and she's
been and gone and done it!

EFFIE. You make fun of everything,
Bertie.

PAPA. Never mind him, Effie. Go on,
dear.

EFFIE (*reads very nervously*).

LOVE AND DEATH.

I.

With flickering light the lurid torch
Glares on the cortège passing slow.
The ivy, weeping, climbs the porch;
The solemn bell swings to and fro.
Strange! on the self-same lovely night,
When stars stole up the azure way,
Two loving souls were winged for flight,
And burst the urn of human clay.
With scarce a sigh their spirits fled;
With tender kiss th' eternal tide
Touched with its lips the deathless
dead,
And they, with souls undying—died.
The stealthy tread within the hall;
The sorrow spake with bated breath;
The nodding plume; the sweeping pall—
All note the pageantry of death.

II.

Within the dusky crypt they lie;
And is Love with them in the tomb?
Can he whom we all deify
And clothe in beauty, dwell in
gloom?
Yes, for awhile; but soon will rise,
As rise those loving souls in one;
And love will guide them through the
skies,
To golden isles beyond the sun.
Infolded in each other's wings,
Entwined now, entwined for ever;
And having loved, an angel sings,
'No need to pass the Stygian river.'
But lurid torches 'midst the gloom;
The sigh subdued in quivering breath;
The sweeping pall; the sable plume,
Are sorry welcomes unto death.

III.

Infolded in each other's wings,
They are not conscious that below
For them the diapason flings
Along the aisle its notes of woe.
Else grief at tears of each loved friend,
Would in their bliss mix sad alloy;
But soul in soul together blend,
And on they float to perfect joy.
A glorious type of love on earth,
The two in one Love leads on high;
And death to them is but the birth
Of life through all eternity.

The lurid torch; the nodding plume;
The sorrow spake with bated breath;
Are scarcely fit, when 'midst the gloom
Love lends his beauteous wings to
death.

BERTIE. That's what I call solemn.
Why, it's the real genuine tune that
poor Dolly died of, Eff.

MAMMA. Really, Bertie, you are in-
corrigible! It is a very pretty poem,
Effie, and does you great credit; and I
waive my claim to the prize in your
favour.

BERTIE. What, without hearing me
and Min? Oh, mamma, what a do!

PAPA. Minnie has asked me to read
her competitive poem, Master Bert; so
I beg you will be quiet—if you can
(*reads*.)

I.

A cheerful fire burns brightly in the
grate;
And Bertie makes droll shadows on
the wall;
Our own dear Pussy, in a sleepy state,
Lies on the rug—a warm and furry
ball.

BERTIE. Oh, my eye!

II.

Around the hearth so cozily we sit;
The kettle bubbles ready for the tea;
Mamma and Effie at their worsted
knit;
Miss Primer plays at cradle-scratch
with me.

III.

A little after nine, I say good night,
And kiss you all, and go off straight
to bed;
And softly comes mamma to take the
light,
And looks a lovely angel by my head.
MINNIE. That's all, papa. I couldn't
write any more.
MAMMA. Darling little girl.
PAPA (*strokes her long curls, but says
nothing*).
BERTIE. Well done, little 'un. Your

verses are quite pre-Raphaelite—a real interior. I'm so glad I've been writing on your birthday—you deserve the sacrifice, my little Thalia.

PAPA. Go on, Bertie, my boy; the young people will soon be here.

BERTIE. Well, you must know, father, I think I am better at Latin hexameters than English odes. I began an address to the sun, and ended it beautifully, thus—

Without it, vegetation ceases—
Both celery and water cresses !
(*A general laugh.*)

I broke down there, and changed the subject to a lovely ode on Minnie's coming birthday.

MINNIE. Dear Bertie !

PAPA. Well go a-head, Bert. I hope it's not long.

BERTIE. Short and sweet as a tomtit's tongue.

TO MY LITTLE SISTER.

I.

A bright golden guinea
I'd give to see Minnie,
With all her companions around,
A keeping her birthday,
And making it mirth-day,
With many a roll on the ground.

II.

I think I can see her,
The sweet little de-ar,
Frisking about like a fawn;
As gay as the thrush,
All in a big bush,
That grows at the end of the lawn.

III.

I see, too, I'm sure,
Her mamma so demure,
With looks not exactly of pleasure,
Exclaiming 'My Min,
My minikin pin,
Does her brother make fun of my
treasure !

'Does he call her a thrush,
All in a big bush ?
His nonsense has plenty of heaven.
I say that my love
Is a beautiful dove,
Whose feathers were put on in
heaven.'

IV.

And I quite agree,
So save one for me—
A plume when she moults, if you
please;
And I promise that then
I will make it a pen,
To write better verses than these.

General applause. Bertie throws down the MS., snatches up the prize volume, turns off the gas, kisses pretty Miss Plover, lately arrived; and exit anyhow; general scramble, &c.

CURTAIN FALLS.

HELLOUDA.



GIVEN BACK ON CHRISTMAS MORN.

(A mother watches by her sick babe.)

ROUND about the casement
 Wail the winds of winter,
 Shaken from the frozen eaves
 Many an icy splinter.
 On the hillside, in the hollow,
 Weaving wreaths of snow:
 Now in gusts of solemn music
 Lost in murmurs low;—
 Howling now across the wold
 In its shroudlike vastness,
 Like the wolves about a fold
 In some Alpine fastness,
 Hungered by the cold.

(The mother sings.)

Babe of mine—babe of mine,
 Must I lose you?
 Dare I weep if the Divine
 Will should choose you?—
 Ah, to mourn, as I have smiled,
 At the thought of you, my child!
 Ah, my child—my child!

Babe of mine—you entwine
 With existence!
 If one strips the clinging vine
 There's resistance—
 Shall not I then—? I talk wild,
 Seeing Death so near my child:—
 Ah, my child—my child!

Babe of mine—heart's best wine—
 Life's pure essence!
 Gloomy shadows, that define
 Death's near presence.
 Dim those dear eyes, undefiled
 As God's violets—ah, my child:
 Ah, my child—my child!

The imperial purple of the night
 Is spread, wine-dark, above,
 But glistens with no gems of light,
 To hint of Heaven's love,
 A sombre pall hangs overhead,
 Fringed with lurid clouds of lead,—
 O'er the sleeping earth below
 One long wide waste of silent snow.
 And the wind moans drearily
 As it wanders by,
 And the night wanes wearily
 In the starlight sky.

(The mother sings.)

Must the dear eyes close?
 Must the lips be still?—
 How I love their speech that flows
 Like a wanton rill!
 Must those cheeks, soft-tinged with rose
 Pallid grow and chill?
 Give her back to me, angel in disguise!—
 So your mystery I shall learn—yet with tear-
 less eyes.
 By the pangs, the prayers,—
 By the mother's glee!
 By her hopes, her fears, her cares,
 Give my child to me—
 Give it back to me!
 Quenched the eyes' soft light—
 Hushed the cowslip breath!
 Going, darling, in the night?
 Spare—oh, spare her, Death!
 Dying—is it so?

Oh, it must not be!
 Can my one poor treasure go?
 Give her back to me,
 Give her back to me:—
 Or take me too—left alone
 Now my little one is gone;
 Ah, my child, my child!

Among the clouds that sail o'erhead
 A yellow radiance is shed:—
 And o'er the hill-tops wraps in snow,
 Is born a tinge of rosy glow.
 Within the air a stir—like wings
 Of angels in their minist'rings.
 A tremulous motion, and a thrill,
 As with faint light the heavens fill.
 Night's sombre clouds are slow withdrawn,
 And Nature cries 'Awake, 'tis dawn.'

About the lonely casement
 Blows fresh the breath of day;—
 The mother, in amazement,
 Sees death-glooms fade away!
 The blue eyes open once again—
 Once more the lips have smiled—
 Her tears fell like the springtime rain—
 God gives her back her child!

(Footsteps are heard under the window.)

Hush, there are footsteps on the snow,
 That pause the lattice-pane below;
 While voices chant the carol-rhymes,
 The Christmas song of olden times.

(Carollers sing an ancient carol.)

Awake, good Christians! Long ago
 The shepherds waked at night,
 And saw the heavens with glory glow,
 And angels in the light.
 Hosannah! sing, Hosannah! sing,
 Hosannah in the height!

New life they told to all on earth,
 New life and blessing bright,
 Forewarning of the Saviour's birth,
 In Bethlehem this night.
 Hosannah! sing, Hosannah! sing,
 Hosannah in the height!

New life to all—new life to all—
 The tidings good recite!
 New life to all, which did befall
 At Bethlehem this night:
 Hosannah! sing, Hosannah! sing,
 Hosannah in the height!

The voices hushed—the footsteps died
 In distance far aloof—
 It seemed a blessing did abide
 Upon that silent roof,—
 As far away their cheery singing
 Upon the frosty air came ringing.

Among the clouds that sail o'erhead
 A yellow glory is outspread;
 And on the hill-tops crowned with snows,
 A rosy blushing radiance grows,
 As wider still the warm light glows:—
 And flooding daylight falls again
 From cloud to hill—from hill to plain!

A golden sea of swimming light
 Poured o'er the sombre shores of night,
 While the glad mother, to her breast
 Her child yet close and closer pressed—
 Her rescued treasure—newly born—
 Her babe—given back on Christmas morn.

T. H.

CHRISTMAS GRUEL.

MY dinner last Christmas Day consisted of gruel. Gruel for roast beef, gruel for boar's head, gruel for turkey, gruel for plum pudding, gruel for mince pies; for almonds and raisins, russet October, tawny port, tins courses and

that Christmas Day pleasure. I was in a half-fashioned country town kept in great country house with an old hall with specially designed for imaginative artists as numbers of the icala. Ivy, holly, side; blazing fires, mistletoe-bough, and

life when I could. Observe, I say, when a man rings I have men- tables, the turkey,

the plum-pudding, and the almonds and raisins; the young man takes delight in the society of the pretty girls, and can neither eat nor drink for thinking of them. But the middle-aged fogey—like your humble servant—what boundless, all-embracing enjoyment is his! He can relish everything—turkey, plum-pudding, almonds and raisins, old port, pretty girls, a nap in his easy chair, a hand at cards, a cigar, what not! Age has its advantages, its privileges: one of the latter I value very much. As a middle-aged fellow, 'done for' long ago, I am the recipient of many pretty, playful attentions from the girls, without exciting serious envy or jealousy. It is my good fortune to have a bald head. Do I astonish you by calling that good fortune? Let me explain. The bald head makes me look older than I am. It gives me a settled-down, sedate appearance. The consequence is that young and pretty girls have no scruple about fondling me, even in the presence of their proper parents and jealous sweet-hearts. I am 'old uncle Tom.' The girls delight to play me off against their lovers when the young fellows are jealous or sulky—as young folks in love often are—and they come in a bevy of beauty and kneel round my chair, and pat my bald head, and tease me in a most delightful manner. I like this, just as I like to dandle pretty little sweet-faced babies on my knee. That is to say, I take their attentions placidly, and enjoy them as an abstract admirer of beauty, and gaiety, and innocence, without a quickened emotion or an extra beat of the pulse. You can't do this when you are young, and your hair curls. At that time of day you must have 'intentions,' you must ask papa and mamma, you must submit to be scowled at by jealous rivals, you must be prepared to name the day, the amount of settlement, and so forth. But I am old and bald. I have gone through all that fire, and I have come out a cool bit of tempered steel, safe and true. I have so many calm loves, you see. Those dainty bits of beauty rustling about me don't take away my appetite for supper, nor dash my relish for a glass of port. My eye wanders

away with perfect contentment from their flashing eyes and ruby lips to contemplate the beeswing floating in the wine cup. Nothing in the way of enjoyment comes amiss to me; but I am wedded to no single pleasure. I take infinite delight in the prattle of my pretty Jane, but when, at the sound of the knocker, she rushes away to meet her dear Edward on the stairs, I turn without a pang to woo the amber lips of my meerschaum pipe.

With all this capacity for enjoyment, it was a sad disappointment to me last year to be seized with a catarrh on the eve of Christmas Day. It is Horace, I believe, who says that no man can be supremely happy who is subject to a cold in the head. I agree with him there entirely. I will even go further, and say that, of all the ills that flesh is heir to, there is no one greater, or harder to bear, than a cold. It is an aspiring, ambitious, desperate malady. While gout is content to assail the foot, and colic modestly takes a middle range, a catarrh audaciously attacks the citadel of the head, and lays all the senses prostrate at one blow. While the tyrant holds sway you cannot see, you cannot taste, you cannot smell, you cannot think, and sometimes you cannot hear. There is a certain depth of wretchedness in the sufferings of the victim, when he does not care what becomes of him. I was at the bottom of this slough of misery and despond on Christmas morning. I had hoped that the tyrant would relax his grip, but I might have known better; he never does; he makes a rule of putting you through the whole process, the middle part being half murder.

I could not go to Oakhurst to my Christmas dinner that day. Everybody else in the house was going somewhere, except the cook, who was an orphan, fifty years of age, a spinster, a hater of her species, and one who was accustomed to say that Sundays and Saturdays, Christmases and Good Fridays, made no difference to her.

It was a dreary day after everybody had gone. I sat alone by the fireside, moping and miserable. On ordinary days I had more visitors than I cared about. To-day nobody came; not even the doctor, though I had engaged him to attend my case. It was a glorious day for him, knowing what to eat, drink, and avoid, and seeing others joyously preparing themselves for draughts and pills. But as for poor me, I was ready to cry when I thought of my loneliness, sadness, and desolation on that day when everybody else was making merry.

Everybody else! Yes, I thought *everybody* else, except me.

The misanthropical cook came in to ask if I would take a little of the boiled mutton which she had prepared for her own dinner. Such was that woman's misanthropy, such her unchristian condition, that though she was offered a piece of beef and materials to make a little plum-pudding, all to herself, she preferred boiled mutton and a suety dumpling. The cook, I say, came in to offer me boiled mutton. I had no appetite, I could not swallow. I asked for gruel, and I had it just about the time that 'everybody' was sitting down to turkey. I did not say grace before that gruel—did anybody ever say grace before gruel, or after? I was heathenish, and summoned Philosophy to my aid. Philosophy—whom I should have expected to appear in the form of a grave old man, with long flowing white locks, and the Book of Knowledge in one hand and the magic Wand of Experience in the other—did not answer the summons. How should such a cold, sedate old spirit be within call of mortal on that day of native gladness. He was no doubt asleep over his musty old book. I performed another incantation. Into a little china cauldron I put various charms, all of which had been prepared with great care, and brought with pains and peril from distant parts of the earth—liquid red fire from the western Indies, lumps of sweetness blanched in blood, drops of acid of the citrus limonium, grown over the volcanoes of Sicily, and waters made mad with fire. These I mixed together with many conjurations, and when I had drunk of the charmed potion—contrary to the express injunctions of my doctor—High Priest of Slops—I summoned to my aid Memory.

She came at my call, a comely maiden, clothed in shadows, with a grave, soft smile on her cheek, and a great depth of thought in her large contemplative eyes. As I gazed at her dreamily, I fell into a pleasant, waking trance, and saw the past roll up upon my vision, like clouds from the west, that the sun glorifies in going down.

I was not to be merry in the present that Christmas night; but the long-loving maid, Memory, was to make me merry in the past, amid Christmas scenes upon which the dark curtain of time had fallen long ago. Memory was more prodigal of her gifts than present reality could be. The envied Everybody else was spending one Christmas. I was spending a dozen.

The first Christmas of my experience rose upon my view, and I was a boy

again, in Scotland, being awoke at five o'clock in the morning to drink sowans. Old style still prevails in Scotland—or did then—and Yule was celebrated on the 6th of January. I have no recollection of roast beef and plum-pudding : but I have a very vivid recollection of sowans—a sort of gruel made from the fermented gluten of oat husks. Not by any means a pleasant drink, even when sweetened with sugar or treacle. But this was the fare peculiar to Yule, and we got up in the middle of the night to drink it. If there were any not able to get up, basins of sowans were carried to them in their beds. It was in the country, at a farm-house. The great sowans drinking took place in the large kitchen. Neighbouring swains came from far and near, through the darkness and the snow, to join in the festivity. Behold Betty, the cook, stirring a great pot on the fire, and a circle of lads and lasses around her, waiting to be served in wooden bickers. It might have been a religious ceremony, it was so sad and solemn. There was no drinking of healths, no singing or dancing, no mirth or jollity, but just a sombre drinking of gluten. We did not go to bed again, but sat up waiting for the 'beggars.' The beggars are the Scotch 'waita,' with a worthier mission. The miscreants, as Mr. Bass or Mr. Babbage would call them, who wake us up in the middle of the night in London, with 'O, rest you merry gentlemen,' or the doleful squeaking of a clarionet, are generally loafers and idle skulks, who seize custom and opportunity to annoy others and benefit themselves. In Scotland the beggars are strapping farmers' sons, who shoulder the bag for the nonce, and go round to the farm-houses begging meal for the poor, generally for lone, lorn widows. They come with a song, but not until daylight doth appear, and the lasses put on their best caps and wreath their best smiles to give them welcome. Now comes the 'rape of the kisses.' The sturdy handsome young beggars throw down their meal-bags, rush in among the lasses, and kiss them all round, amid such a 'skel-leching'—expressive word that—and giggling as never was heard. Then the mistress of the house gives the young fellows a dram, and in the true spirit of the Saxon *lefdey*, or lady, drops with her own hands a portion of meal into each bag. There are many good souls, animated by the feeling of the time, who do good deeds and blush to let them be known. Aware of this, the poor old widows, when they receive the bounty, take care to sift the meal, and

oftentimes find in the sieve a residuum of shillings and sixpences.

A marked feature of the Yule festivities was a grand tea-breakfast to the servants and dependants. At ordinary times the servants' breakfast consisted of oatmeal porridge, milk, and oat cakes. But on Yule morning they had a breakfast of tea, white bread—that is to say, bread made of flour—eggs, and haddocks. Ah! what a glorious 'ploy,'—the only English equivalent for this word I can think of is 'spree,' and that does not quite express it—was that Yule breakfast! In my vision I can see Betty, the cook, at the head of the great deal table, pouring out the tea from a big, battered Britannia-metal pot, into cups of all sizes and patterns; while down the sides are seated ploughmen and ploughboys, each with a buxom lass by his side, all laughing, giggling, and eating at one and the same time. There is no stint of white bread and butter, but the allowance of tea, which is a rather expensive article at this time of day, is limited, and the infusion soon pales before the brisk and active demand. I remember something about it not being genteel to take more than two cups of tea, and to drink out of the saucer; but as tea comes but once a year on this scene, all such etiquette is thrown to the winds. I can hear Betty saying it now, 'I declare that loon (Anglice, 'boy.') Geordie has had fourteen cups.' I don't doubt it. Geordie had been gulping down cup after cup, and sending up for more with astonishing despatch. The colour had gone out of the liquid long ago, but what was that to Geordie or Jamie, or Jessie or Jenny, so long as it ran out of a teapot, and left some grouts at the bottom of the cup to tell fortunes by. What rare fun we had reading fortunes in the cups! It afforded such a capital opportunity for lads and lasses to look over each other's shoulders, and get their lips and cheeks close together. And when rosy cheeks and warm lips approach within a certain range of each other, they are apt, like the magnet and the bit of steel, to come suddenly into collision. They sat long, with lingering delight, over their tea-breakfast (long after the loaves and the butter and the haddocks had disappeared), to read the cups; and great was the laughter when the close juxtaposition of a long stalk of tea and a short stalk of tea, followed by a motley crowd of stalks of all sizes, was declared to portend the marriage of Willie the grieve (bailliff) with Annie the little housemaid.

There is no going to church in Presbyterian Scotland on Christmas Day. No

religious exercises of any kind hold a place in my memory in connection with old Yule. It was merely a holiday in the schoolboy's sense of the word, a day of play. The one amusement especially associated with the occasion was a shooting match, at which the highest prize was a gun, or a silver watch, and the lowest a bane kame. Do you know what a bane kame is? Let me whisper in your ear. A bone comb—that kind of comb which has small teeth! I remember Jamie coming home from the shooting looking very glum and down-cast.

'Weel Jamie,' said Willie, 'have you won the gun?'

'Na.'

'Nor the watch?'

'Na.'

'Have ye nae won onything?'

'On ay, I've just won the bane kame!'

'Weel,' said Willie, who was a bit of a wit in his dry way, 'I'm just thinking you'll be likely to do mair execution with the bane kame than with the gun.'

Holly and mistletoe do not enter into the Scotch Christmas rites. When I think of these things my vision changes to a farm-house in Kent, where I spent my first English Christmas. I am realizing what I had often read of in books. I go out to the wood to assist in bringing home the Yule log. I am assisting an elderly spinster to decorate the rooms with holly and mistletoe. I remember here, pleasantly, over my gruel, how I fell plump over head and ears in love with her, though she was old enough to be my mother, and made no attempt to conceal her liking for gin-and-water. She had a girlish way with her that captivated me, a way of giggling and shaking her curls. I was quick to learn the privileges of an English Christmas, and kissed her under the mistletoe the moment she hung it up. It was she who started up, as twelve o'clock struck on the Eve, to let Christmas in. I ran with her to the door, and kissed her again. I was very happy then, for I did not find out until afterwards that Miss Lizzy was giddy even to the verge of lunacy, and had loved and been in love a hundred times. On Twelfth-night she trysted me to the orchard at ten o'clock at night, and there, under a cherry-tree, while the moon shone bright, she said—

'Tom, let us be married, and fly to foreign lands.'

I had dreamt of something of the kind; but this abrupt way of proposing to settle it cooled my ardour.

'Give me,' I said, 'time for reflection.'

'Love,' she replied, almost fiercely, 'never reflects.'

Miss Lizzy had money, and her friends found it expedient to prove, which they did, that she was *non compos*. But she made a very sane remark that time under the cherry tree, by the light of the moon, when she said that 'love never reflects.' After long experience I am prepared to say it does not.

For the first time in my life, at that Kentish farm-house, I heard the waits singing the Christmas carol; for the first time I went to church on Christmas Day—a church decorated with evergreens—what a sight to me! For the first time I saw the boar's head and the flaming Christmas pudding brought in with due ceremony. English people grow up from infancy accustomed to these Christmas rites, and are little impressed by them. But upon the mind and sympathy of an adult stranger they strike with the force and charm of enchantment. The very remembrance of that Christmas Day brings a thrill of pleasure, which I fear no Christmas of the future will ever stir, in my accustomed breast.

This vision fades, and another rises in its stead. A pleasant foregathering of children, and children's children, on Christmas Day round a granddad's board. It was our aged host's birthday, too. He was ninety-two years of age that very Christmas Day. A little, feeble old man he was, almost as helpless as a child, but still cheery and hearty. When the children and the grandchildren—the eldest child was threescore—came in from church, they found the old man seated in his arm-chair directly under the branch of mistletoe. His youngest daughter (who had remained unmarried for her poor old father's sake, that she might live with him and attend upon him), had placed him there to be kissed, like a pretty baby. Two generations made a rush at him, and, almost smothering him first, nearly devoured him afterwards. It was an affecting sight to see so much love centring in a poor old man, sitting, as it were, on the very brink of the grave. The old man cried for very happiness, and his good daughter had to go and wipe away his tears, for he was too feeble to perform even that office for himself. At dinner time he sat at the head of his table, as he had always done, though he could no longer do the honours. And after dinner, when he had had half a glass of wine—the dear old baby!—he cheered up wonderfully, and became quite garrulous about

the days of his youth, when he was 'a sad young dog, sir,' and knew all the sparks and bloods about town.

One reminiscence of his makes me cherish a particular remembrance of this Christmas Day. He had once seen Dr. Johnson. When he was a very little boy his father had held him up in a crowd near Temple Bar, to look at a fat man in a brown coat and a shovel hat. And that fat man was the great lexicographer.

'Did you ever see Oliver Goldsmith?' I asked.

'No, he never saw him.'

'But you heard a great deal about him, at that time?'

'No; we didn't hear much about Oliver Goldsmith. Johnson was the great man.'

You can imagine that, can you not? The talking man much heard of; the quiet man of thought and modest genius unregarded.

Some great-grandchildren came in in the evening. One, aged five, a pretty little puss, with blue eyes and flaxen hair, behaved quite in a motherly manner towards her great-granddad; kissed him patronizingly on both cheeks, patted his bald head, and making him comfortable in his chair, talked to him soothingly in baby language. There were four generations round the suppertable. The old man was so proud and so happy that he would insist upon sitting up long after his usual bed time. When his daughter said it was time for by-by, he snapped his fingers at her, demanded another glass of punch, and declared he would sing us a song. There was a capital song that Captain Morris used to sing, he said, but—but he couldn't remember it. He, he was a rare blade, Captain Morris, a rare blade; could sing a first-rate song. No; he couldn't remember that song, but he would try to remember another. And presently, after a good deal of cogitation, the nonagenarian struck up, in a shrill, quavering treble—

'Here's to the maiden of blushing fifteen,
Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant queen,
Here's to the——'

At this point his memory failed him, and, thinking for some time, he said—

'Never mind, we'll sing the chorus.'

Let the glass pass,
We'll drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.'

The next verse escaped him altogether, and he said he would sing us another capital song, called the Vicar and Moses.

But he forgot that too, and went back to the chorus of 'Here's to the maiden,' and finished up by draining his half glass of weak punch, with some faint imitation of the manner of the roaring blade he used to be when he was young.

It was not until twelve o'clock struck that the old great-granddad would consent to retire. And then his loving daughter took him by the arm and helped him to his room, where she put him to bed and tucked him up like a child.

Alas! he sleeps in his last bed now; the old hearth is desolate; the children are scattered, never to meet more until they are gathered together in the Father's House of many Mansions.

The next Christmas Day that rises on the magic disc of memory is suggested by the one I have just described; not because it was like it, but because it was *very* unlike it. It is memorable as one of the coldest, most uncomfortable Christmas Days I ever spent. I had three invitations to dinner that day. One to a country-house, a long distance from London; the second came from a homely family in the natural wilds of Islington; and the third was conveyed to me by an aristocratic personage, with a handle to his name, who resided in the unnatural tamenesses of Belgravia. He was not a duke, nor a lord, but he was something even more awful, grand, and unapproachable, for he was a scientific baronet, who wrote D.C.L., and LL.D., and F.R.S., and F.R.G.S., &c., after his name.

The terms in which he couched his invitation make it clear to me now—though I did not perceive it at the time—that he invited me rather in pity than in a spirit of genial hospitality. The note was written on very thick, coarse-grained paper—(I wonder why thick coarse-grained paper is considered aristocratic!)—adorned with a coat of arms, and the handwriting was an illegible scientific scrawl. (I wonder why science, which is so accurate and precise in other things, always writes such a bad hand.) And the great man, Bart., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., &c., said, as well as I could make out, that I might come and 'eat my Christmas dinner' with him. I didn't like that phrase—'eat my Christmas dinner.' To be sure it was the purpose of the thing; but it was, I thought, a cold-blooded way of putting it. I remember now that I had turned author about that period. I daresay he thought a dinner at any time would be a charity to me. My desire to dine with a baronet, however, blinded me to any

offence that might have lurked in the terms of the note; and disdaining humble Islington, where I should have been supremely happy, I accepted the invitation.

I went in full evening costume, and arrived at the grand mansion a quarter of an hour before the time appointed, which was six o'clock. I was received in the hall by a stately footman, who conducted me to the drawing-room. The Baronet was there, seated in his arm-chair, absorbed in a Review with a sombre cover, indicating that it was solemn and solid and scientific. He did not rise to bid me welcome; but carelessly extended three cold fingers for me to shake, and said 'How do?' Nothing about a merry Christmas to me, or any seasonable greeting of that sort. Indeed there were no signs of Christmas in the house. The drawing-room was very elegant, with rich curtains, soft couches, large mirrors, marble busts and statues, and a great deal of gilding; but my eye searched in vain for the pleasant twinkle of a holly-berry or the glint of a mistletoe-leaf. The baronet's guests dropped in one by one. They were all males, and as they mostly appeared with rumpled hair, and wore spectacles, I judged that, like their host, they were scientific, and wrote capital letters after their names. It proved so.

There were no ladies of the family except her ladyship, and she excused herself from coming down to dinner on the ground of indisposition. So we, the male guests, tumbled down to the dining-room in a disorderly mob. On the stairs I heard 'superphosphate' mentioned, also 'carbonated' something, likewise an allusion to 'caloric.'

It was a magnificent dinner, with everything proper to the season, and many other things besides. It struck me, however, that the viands proper to the season—the turkey, the roast beef, and the plum-pudding, were introduced almost apologetically, in deference to prejudice and foolish custom. It was a long time before we came to the turkey, nobody took roast beef, and the plum-pudding was a little thing made in a shape, with no sprig of holly in it, and without a glory of blazing brandy. Everything was handed round by two silent footmen. And the guests were almost as silent as the attendants. At no time was there any general conversation; but after the champagne had gone round, I heard one gentleman, with tumbled hair and spectacles, say something to a gentleman next him, with a rumpled shirt and spectacles,

about albumen in connection with the veal cutlets; while the sight of the plum-pudding suggested to a third gentleman, with a bald head and a black stock, a grave remark about saccharine matter and prussic acid.

After dinner the scientific gentlemen drank a good deal of wine; but it seemed to have no particular effect upon them, except to make their faces red. They did not become at all jolly, and merry Christmas was not once alluded to. After tea, which was served in the drawing-room—handed round on a magnificent, but chilly silver salver, by the solemnest of the two footmen—the baronet and his guests—with the exception of four who sat down to play whist for half-crown points in a corner, dimly lighted by two tall yellow-looking wax candles—went to sleep. I was not sleepy. My dinner had not warmed my blood a bit, nor added a throb to my pulse, and I sat uncomfortably awake in the midst of the sleepers, afraid to move, lest I should make a noise and wake them. I would have given anything to sneak away; but I was bound to wait and bid my host good night. I found an opportunity at last.

'Good night, sir; I—am—very—I have——'

I could not say it, and the baronet did not care whether I said it or not. He gave me, without rising, the same three fingers, still cold, and said—

'Good night to you. James, show Mr. ——'

He fell asleep again here.

James showed me the——door, in fact, and I went forth into the keen frosty night with a sense that the free air, at least, was seasonable. Going home through the chilly streets, seeing the brightly-lighted windows, and hearing the sound of merry voices within, I felt, even after my sumptuous dinner, as if I were homeless, friendless, and hungry, on that Christmas night.

The scene changes once more, bringing back to me a Christmas Day big with my fate. I was nervous, excited, and had no appetite. Was I ill, or was I going to be married? Neither. Was-sail flowed in abundance, but not for me. Pretty girls stood under the mistletoe and tempted me not. In the midst of the mirth and jollity I was moody, thoughtful, and anxious. Something was going to happen on the morrow. It was not Christmas Day that I thought about, but the day after. Was I reckoning what I should get in Christmas boxes? Not exactly that either; but I was reckoning with fear and trembling what I might expect from

Christmas boxes, pit, and gallery. I had written a Christmas piece for a theatre, and to-morrow would bring boxing-night, and success or failure. I remember, while looking out of the window humming, not Christmas carols, but my own comic songs, that a crow flew by. Was that an omen? And was one crow a good omen? The wish being father to the thought, I comforted myself with the conclusion that it was a good omen. Presently a second crow flew by. No, I was wrong. Two crows were a good omen. By-and-by a third crow flew past. Ah! now I remember, it is three crows that constitute a good omen. No more crows came, and I was quite sure of it. Three crows had appeared to me, and the piece would be a success. But still I am anxious and doubtful, and my heart is in a flutter. I am realizing

once more in memory a sensation which I am afraid I shall never realize again in actuality; for I have come to estimate applause at its true value; I have come to know that that which is applauded the most is generally that which deserves it the least.

I was bowing to the public in answer to the enthusiastic call which made me that night the happiest man in London, when the sound of the knocker dispelled the vision, and announced that my people had come home from their Christmas festivities. They apologized for being so late, and expressed great concern that I had been condemned to loneliness and gruel on Christmas Day.

Had I thought the time long? 'Not at all,' I said. Have you, my readers? If not, *plaudite et valet*.

ANDREW HALLIDAY.

MERRY GAMES FOR CHRISTMAS TIME.

EVEN if we had not been told by a higher authority that, To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;—if the maxim had not been consecrated by ages, forming part of the golden old-world wisdom, it would still be pressed upon our acceptance by a perusal of the almanack, as well as by our observation, if not by our proper experience, of the daily events of human life.

For all Christendom there are days

and seasons (as Good Friday and Lent), when, without being bigoted or superstitious—although cheerful thankfulness is allowable, nay, praiseworthy, excessive merriment is most inopportune. For most individuals past their early youth—for many, unfortunately, still in early youth—there are sad anniversaries on which mirth shocks the feeling heart; when it avoids the world's bustle, seeking the shade, for retirement and searching self-examination. Without being altogether plunged in grief, it is in the mood of 'Il Penseroso,'—

'There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee, with honey'd thigh,
At her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring.
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still, removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth.'

But there are also birthdays, wedding-days, days of rescue from peril—grateful remembrances of escape from railway collision, shipwreck, disease, struggles with beasts of prey (whether quadruped or human) and other shocks which flesh is heir to. There are thanksgiving days for signal good fortune, happy restorations, or even mere bare justice done; when the very mourner lays aside his tokens of bereavement, and wears a smile, at least for the sake of others. 'L'Allegro' is in the ascendant:—

'Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful jollity,
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides;
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty.'

Similarly, what people is not bound, as a society, to rejoice on the recurrence of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas time? Holydays may remain holy days, without suppressing a whit of their gaiety. There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing. Now is the time to speak out cheerily, to shake hands and embrace—observing the strictest punctilio—with hearty goodwill and friendliness.

It is a time for four o'clock dinners and pantomime-going; for evening parties and hops (not balls), with stand-up suppers, snapdragon, private lotteries with all prizes, and juvenile dramatic efforts: to vary which, and call forth the 'Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles' enshrined in Milton's immortal verse, we will resuscitate a few of the quips and cranks known to our childhood as Christmas games. All they need, to carry them out successfully, is a room or two neither too spacious nor too fragile-furnished, and thorough good-nature on the part of the performers.

Christmas games are based on the grand fundamental theory of being, like Falstaff, amusing in themselves,

and in calling forth after-amusement as their consequence. They make you laugh while bringing in forfeits, which will probably make you laugh still more. What would a Christmas game without forfeits be, but soup without salt, plum-pudding without plums, Cupid without his bow and arrows, a fiddler or a drummer without their drum or fiddlesticks? Blindman's Buff is no exception, because the forfeit is exacted on the spot. The blind man takes his toll in ready money. 'One bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,' is applicable to flounced, flowered, and furbelowed, as well as to feathered bipeds.

Forfeits, then, there *must* be, enough and to spare. If they come in slowly by the more serious (so to speak) and orthodox games, they must be had by readier, looser, less dignified methods; because it is not to a Quakers' meeting that the light-hearted guests have been invited. The queen of the evening *must* maintain her revenue of fun, and has a right to levy forfeit-taxes according to her own good pleasure. Even if she resort to Nip-Nose I shall not grumble, provided that a pretty hand nip mine. Having mentioned which, we may as well have done with it. It is as good an overture as any other to our harmonious performance of concerted pieces.

The party, seated in a circle, ladies and gentlemen alternately, as far as may be, each gently takes successively the tip of his or her neighbour's nose between his or her finger and thumb. While doing this, the parties concerned interrogate each other with absurd questions or indulge in ridiculous remarks. As all are bound to keep their countenance, under pain of fine, and perhaps eventual imprisonment, the object is to make your neighbour laugh. Whoever laughs pays a forfeit. It need not be a downright horse laugh; a broad grin or a giggle suffices to incur the penalty.

Be careful not to soil the tips of your finger and thumb with burnt cork, carmine, or other colouring matter, before applying them to your neighbour's nose. But, if you do, pray don't, for the world, tell anybody that I put you up to it. Still less will you tinge your own nose with any hue not natural to it before presenting it to be nipped. It might make your fair neighbour laugh, and so expose her to the payment of a forfeit, besides causing her to convey with her fingers the pigment to *her* neighbour's nose. Oh, no! you would never think of such a thing! Its name is 'Never-Known.'

Another mode of collecting forfeits in plenty in a very short time is the Game of Tapes. It plays, in a measure, on the same confusion of ideas which renders a 'losing game' of draughts so perplexing at first. Each person holds a piece of tape by one end. The other ends are grasped, like so many single reins, in the hands of the leader of the game, whose place is consequently in the centre of the ring. When he calls out 'Loose!' everybody must tighten their tape; when he gives the word of command, 'Tight!' they must slacken it. It is an experiment on the Rule of Contraries, showing how much we are the creatures of habit. A forfeit is exacted from every person who literally obeys the word of command.

For Fly, Feather, fly! ten or twelve

young people sit in a circle as close together as they can get, without crowding. Somebody takes a tuft of cotton wool, or a downy feather, and lets it float in the air above the heads of the group, giving it a puff with his breath. The person towards whom it directs its descent must likewise blow it upwards and away. If it falls upon him he pays a forfeit. A dozen persons so employed in chasing with their breath the common enemy compose a most amusing group, resembling the messengers of Æolus, as represented in old mythological pictures. The feather often defies them bravely, challenging them to do their worst, with poor King Lear's world-famous taunt—

'Blow, wind, and crack your cheeks; rage
blow!

Each person thus exhibits their own private and peculiar mode of giving a puff. It occasionally happens that, as it is hard to laugh and blow at the same time, the feather finds its way into the mouth of the intending blower. Of course the involuntary feather-eater pays a double forfeit as the penalty of his curious taste.

Blindman's Buff may be played with a wand, which relieves it of the objection of a tendency to romp. The blind man, with a long wand in his hand, is placed in the middle of the room. The players stand round him in a ring, hand in hand, singing a chorus. They suddenly cease, and as soon as they are silent, the blind man stretches out his wand till it touches somebody who is obliged to take hold of it by the end.

The blind man utters three cries, which the person holding the wand must imitate. If recognized by the voice, he must pay a forfeit, and likewise take the blind man's place.

Whose Shadow am I? Guess if you can, is almost an artistic game. The Guesser (chosen by lot) in this, has no bandage on his eyes, but he need have all his wits about him. A white sheet is stretched on a screen, exactly as for a magic lantern. The Guesser is made to sit facing the screen on a stool so low that his shadow will not fall upon it. At a suitable distance behind him, a single waxlight is placed on a table or stand, and all the other lights are extinguished. When everything is ready, the company form a sort of procession, passing one after the other in Indian

file between the Guesser (who is strictly forbidden to turn his head) and the table on which the waxlight stands. The consequence of which is that each person's form is momentarily thrown upon the screen, in the shape of a black and shadowy profile.

As they pass, the Guesser is obliged to name aloud the person whose portrait he fancies he beholds. The mistakes made are sometimes very droll, when the passers cleverly change their usual gait and carriage. Whoever is guessed rightly, pays a forfeit. The game may be varied and prolonged by changing the Guesser, and by allowing the passers-by to adopt some slight disguise.

Cross Questions will fill an interval between the different ways of gathering forfeits. There are several modes of putting them. One is, to write on a given number of cards so many separate questions. An equal number of answers is similarly prepared—answers which perfectly fit some imaginary inquiry, but which are very absurd when applied to others. One set of cards is placed in the hands of a lady, the other of a gentleman, each of whom shuffles and cuts their respective pack. The person who holds the questions, reads the first of them aloud, which is responded to by the other party's announcing the first answer. The inter-

rogatory then continues until both packs are exhausted together.

As a sample of what may turn up, suppose:

Question. Are you of an affectionate disposition?

Answer. Whenever I can.

Q. Do you believe in lovers' vows?

A. Once a month, on the thirty-second.

Q. Are you faithful to your promises of attachment?

A. That depends on circumstances.

Q. Do you love those who love you?

A. A very pretty question to ask!

Q. Do you give yourself airs?

A. When I am fast asleep.

Q. Are you fond of dancing?

A. Inquire next door.

Q. Do you love me?

A. I will tell you that to-morrow.

Q. Are you capricious?

A. All day long and half the night.

Q. Are you fond of a tête-à-tête?

A. I should think so indeed.

Q. How do you do?

A. I haven't the slightest idea.

The principle of 'The House that Jack Built' may be extended to Games of Improvisation, which may be varied infinitely, every one being called upon to contribute his own quota of ingenuity. Suppose twelve persons seated in a circle. They draw lots for the respective places, which we will designate by the Roman numerals. No. I. has to begin the game; the others continue it in succession, each adding a little bit of his own, which all his followers are obliged to repeat, until the phrase attains the proportions of a rolling snow-ball. *Crescit eundo*, if Latin do not incur a forfeit in a Christmas Game. The choice of the starting-point rests with I.; he takes whatever on earth he pleases. The more out of the way it is,

and the more likely to puzzle his followers, the better. If his theme could baffle them all, they would all have to pay a forfeit. Suppose, then,—

I. abruptly announces, 'Here is the Key of the king's garden.'

II. immediately adds, 'Here is the String tied to the Key of the king's garden.'

III. goes on, 'Here is the Rat, that gnawed the String, tied to the Key of the king's garden.'

IV. continues, 'Here is the Cat, that killed the Rat, that gnawed the String, tied to the Key of the king's garden.'

V. has 'Here is the Dog, that worried the Cat. . . .'

VI. 'Here is the Stick that beat the Dog. . . .'

VII. 'Here is the Fire, that burnt the Stick. . . .'

VIII. 'Here is the Water, that quenched the fire. . . .'

IX. 'Here is the Bucket, that brought the Water. . . .'

X. 'Here is the Wood, that made the Bucket. . . .'

XI. 'Here is the Tree that furnished the Wood. . . .'

XII. ought to conclude triumphantly, 'Here is the Man, that planted the Tree, that furnished the Wood, that made the Bucket, that brought the Water, that quenched the Fire, that burnt the Stick, that beat the Dog, that worried the Cat, that killed the Rat, that gnawed the String, tied to the Key of the king's garden.'

Let our readers try what they can make, in this style, out of 'Here is a Christmas Tree,' or 'This is Dr. Birch-em's Rod.'

The same thing is put in another form, thus: when the circle is formed, I., passing a key, a pocket-knife, or other small object to his neighbour, says, 'I sell you the House of my little good-man.' II. does the same to his neighbour, saying, 'I sell you the Door of the House of my little good-man. III. carries on the game with, 'I sell you the Lock, of the Door, of the House, of my little good-man: and so on. Whoever makes a mistake, or fails to hit upon some pertinent addition, pays a forfeit.

Quite a different affair is The Little Goodman is Still Alive. A piece of paper is twisted into a torch, lighted at a candle, and the flame blown out. As

long as any sparks are still alight, it is passed from hand to hand, each person saying, 'My little Goodman is still alive,' or 'He is hard to kill, is my little Goodman,' or, 'He is not dead yet, my little Goodman,' or any other phrase to the same purpose. The person in whose hands the last spark goes out pays a forfeit. As long as the fire remains strong and bright, people are in no hurry to pass it on to their neighbour, who is bound to receive it as soon as the formula is pronounced; when, on the contrary, the last spark threatens to die out, everybody gabbles with astounding rapidity, in order to get rid of it as quickly as possible. It certainly affords plenty of fun without taxing the intellect very severely.

The Game of Echo consists in telling a story which Echo is supposed to im-

interrupt, whenever certain words (agreed upon beforehand) are pronounced. Each person present has to re-echo some one given word, whenever it occurs. The words selected are those likely to occur most frequently in the course of the tale. If a military anecdote have to be related, appropriate words for repetition would be *soldier*, *uniform*, *gaiters*, *rifle*, *sword*, *scabbard*, *bayonet*, *foraging cap*, *haversac*, &c.

For instance: One morning a brave soldier (*soldier*) received orders to join his regiment; so he bade adieu to his friends, and set off on foot. After walking twenty miles, feeling a little tired, he sat down at the foot of a tree, resting his rifle (*rifle*) against its mossy trunk. Just as he was falling off into a doze, he heard piercing cries of distress; at which, he drew his sword (*sword*) from its scabbard (*scabbard*) and fixed his bayonet (*bayonet*) at the end of his rifle (*rifle*). On reaching the spot, he found robbers plundering a lady and gentleman. One of the villains fired at him; but the shot passed through his foraging-cap (*foraging-cap*) without injuring a hair of his head; another struck at him with a knife, but it did not penetrate his leather gaiters (*gaiters*). With all their violence, they merely tore the soldier's (*soldier's*) uniform (*uniform*). The lady fainted with the fright; but the soldier (*soldier*), taking a cordial from his haversac (*haversac*), soon succeeded in restoring her to consciousness. The yarn may be spun, *ad libitum*, to any length, calling forth responses from the surrounding echoes as frequently as possible. If they fail to take up the cue, a forfeit is their punishment.

In The Cricket and the Ants, you draw lots to see who first shall play the part of Cricket. That personage remains standing, while the Ants seat themselves before him in a line or round him in a circle, as pleases them best. The Cricket writes the name of some grain or other food which he selects as his diet with a pencil on a scrap of paper, which he folds and keeps concealed in his hand. After which, with a low bow to the Ants, he says, 'My dear friends, my worthy neighbours, I am very hungry. Won't you spare me something to eat?' Then, addressing himself to one in particular, he asks, 'You, my dear lady, with such a good-natured face, what will you give me to stay my stomach?'

The other answers, 'I have nothing but a grain of Millet (or any other grain she chooses to select) at your service.'

'Much obliged,' says the Cricket, 'but I can't eat that.' 'And you, my charming neighbour,' addressing another, 'what will you bestow?'

'A nice little Worm, quite fat, and red.'

'No, I thank you, pretty neighbour; worms don't agree with me.'

He thus applies to one Ant after the other, who offer him a Crumb of Bread, a Fly, a grain of Wheat, Barley, Rice, &c. (indispensably something suited to his food, and which have not been mentioned before; otherwise the Ant has to pay a forfeit). When everybody has been applied to, and the article noted on the paper has not been named, the Cricket has to pay a forfeit and proceed to the second question. But if one of the Ants pronounces that word, the Cricket says, 'I accept it, kind friend, and may Heaven recompense your generosity!' He then shows his paper, and what is written on it. The Ant pays a forfeit, and, rising from her seat, has to change places with the Cricket.

But instead of recommencing the game, the new Cricket continues it as follows. Addressing any one of the party he pleases, 'Neighbour,' he says, 'I have had an excellent dinner, thanks to the Ants' hospitality. I now feel an inclination to dance. What dance do you advise me to try?' (The name of some dance is noted on paper, and concealed, exactly as the food had been.)

The Ants answer, 'A hornpipe—a minuet—a reel—a jig,' according to their guess or fancy. So long as the dance is not named the Cricket manifests his unwillingness to perform the one proposed. If no one hits on the right dance, the Cricket has to go on to the third question, paying a forfeit. The Ant who names any dance a second time also incurs a forfeit. On naming the dance inscribed, an Ant is metamorphosed into the Cricket.

'I am going to dance,' says the new Cricket; 'but dancing without music is very poor work. What instrument do you prefer me to dance to?' The Ants name the Fiddle, the Bagpipes, the Clarionet, the Piano, and so forth, until they hit on the one inscribed beforehand; the result of which is the same as on the preceding occasions.

'I have had enough dancing!' the fourth Cricket exclaims. 'If you will only keep quiet, my excellent friends, and not talk so loud, and not laugh at all, I should like a nap. Where do you advise me to take it?' Each Ant, interrogated, replies, 'On a Bed of Rose-leaves, on the Grass, on the Sand, on a

Mossy Bank,' &c., with the same conditions as before.

The fifth and last Cricket says, 'I should sleep soundly enough on what you have named, but I fear some bird will come and eat me up. Tell me which bird is the fondest of crickets?' They guess the Nightingale, the Lark, the Rook, and so on, until the right bird has been named; after which, they proceed to redeeming the forfeits.

Forfeits should be as varied, ingenious, and unexpected as possible. New ones, invented on the spur of the moment, are sure to meet with signal success. But no one should venture to play at forfeits who has not, in the first place, perfect command of temper, or who cannot, secondly, while in the

height of merriment, observe the rules of good breeding and decorum. Young people gifted with an average amount of tact will easily distinguish between well-bred fun and vulgar coarseness. Everybody admitted into society must know that an easily-perceptible barrier separates the horse-play of rustics from the games of persons of refinement. As there are jokes permissible and jokes not permissible in ladies' company, so there may even be romping which the seasonal or the festive occasion allows, as there certainly is romping which may not, without risk of impropriety and offence, be indulged in on any occasion. It is impossible to define the limit in words. Everybody's good sense and good feeling will tell how far to go

and no farther, in relaxing the reins of strict etiquette while indulging in the outbreaks of social mirth.

In no class of forfeits is good breeding more indispensable than in that which involves the act of kissing. But a word to the wise is sufficient. Our forefathers practised them innocently, and so, it is hoped, may we; and, therefore, without further preface or sermon, we will give a few examples, beginning with the tantalizing position of being *A Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance*. In this, the person to pay the penalty takes his seat on a chair, when a lady comes and sits upon his knees, to be kissed by another gentleman.

Amongst penitential kisses are the *Convent kiss* and the *Capuchin's kiss*, so named out of pity, or irony, or both.

For the first the back of a chair is substituted for the grating of the convent door; and as the wooden bars are mostly wider apart than the iron ones, the former have decidedly the advantage.

For the *Monastic kiss*, a gentleman and lady kneel on the carpet back to back. Both then turn their heads, one to the right, the other to the left, until the desired salute is given. As the position is rather fatiguing for the lady, and might even cause her to fall, it is allowable for the gentleman delicately to help her to keep her balance with his arm.

Kissing your own shadow is performed by placing yourself between the light and the lady.

Kissing the candlestick is a little trick played on a lady whom you have

cunningly persuaded into holding a candle.

Kissing the bottom of the candlestick may be effected by placing the candlestick on the lady's head.

Showing the Spirit of Contradiction is doing the very reverse of what the company tells you to do. You are a lucky fellow, therefore, if a lady tells you that she insists upon your not kissing her. When condemned, as a forfeit, To Sulk, you whisper some one lady's name in the ear of the person who holds the forfeit, and then put yourself in a corner. The forfeit-holder commands the ladies, one after the other, to go and console you in your corner. You are obliged, however unwillingly, to turn your back on all

except the fair one whose name you had previously designated, whom you may kiss as heartily as you please.

To Go a-Begging and To Perform a Pilgrimage are favourite forfeits. For the first, you go down on your knees before a lady, and touch her hands repeatedly with your own hands clasped. She pretends to be deaf to your entreaties, and affects not to understand what it is you require. At last she asks, 'Do you want some bread? Do you want some water? Do you want a halfpenny? Do you want a pair of shoes?' and so on. To each of these questions you reply negatively by a shake of the head and continued supplications with your clasped hands. At last she inquires, 'Do you want a

kiss?' At which you jump up joyfully, and immediately take the proffered salute.

For the second, we will suppose the company to form a sort of circle. You take a lady by the hand, and lead her round the circle, presenting her to every person present; saying to the gentlemen, 'A kiss, if you please, for my little sister, and a little bit of bread for myself;' to the ladies, 'A little bit of bread for my little sister, and a kiss for myself.' The kiss can by no means be refused.

In Distributing Kisses by Chance, the person forfeited, unfortunately, has none for himself. He takes separately the four kings and the four queens out of a pack of cards, shuffles them separately, and then gives one each of the first to any four gentlemen he chooses in the company, and one each of the

second to any four ladies. The holder of the king of hearts is bound to kiss the holderess of the queen of hearts, and so on of the rest. All which seems slow work to the kiss-distributor. Nevertheless, he may derive a little amusement in giving the kings to the vainest young gentlemen present, and the queens to the oldest or plainest ladies.

If condemned to the Kiss with a Right-about Face, you must go and stand with your back to a door, where you call upon a lady to come and stand opposite to you, facing you. She then calls on a gentleman, who places himself close to her, back to back; which goes on until the whole company has formed a line of couples. At a signal from the Mistress of the Revels, everybody performs the evolution of right-about face, and kisses the person so

presented to him. The consequence is that *you* face the door; and your duty is to give it a smack as hearty as any of those you may hear sounding behind you.

To have to act the Lovers' Bridge is not an agreeable forfeit to pay. You go down on your hands and knees; a lady and gentleman sit on your back, and while seated there give and receive a kiss. If, in consequence of weakness, or a sudden spasm, you let them down, they will hardly be so unreasonable as to complain of the infirmities to which juvenile nature is liable. To Measure out so many Ells or Yards of Love, you lead a lady into the middle of the room, take both her hands in yours; you stretch out both arms, as if measuring cloth, and deposit a gentle embrace on her cheek. The pleasing operation has to be repeated as many times as Ells of Love are ordered.

The Hare's Kiss, or the Rabbit's Kiss, is too ridiculous; yet we have seen it given—and taken. The couple indicated take a needleful of thread, each putting one end in their mouth. They then mumble and nibble, and take it in, each their portion, rabbit-wise, maintaining their gravity all the while, until their faces are near enough to accomplish the *dénouement*. If they laugh they will be a long while about it.

The Journey to Corinth—or anywhere else—resembles, in some respects, John Gilpin's famous and unfruitful ride. The forfeit-payer, who is doing penance, holding a lighted taper, leads round the room another gentleman, with a white pocket handkerchief in his hand. This gentleman kisses every lady in turn, and each time politely wipes the lips of his conductor, the penitential forfeit-payer, which may water, but which want no wiping.

You Kiss the Lady you Love best, Without Anybody's knowing Who she is, by so saluting every lady present.

In the Disappointed Kiss, the lady advances towards the penitent, as if to confer that favour on him; then, suddenly turning aside, she allows her nearest neighbour to touch her cheek with his lips.

When compelled by a forfeit To Sigh, you go into a corner, and wait there until you are asked, 'For whom are you sighing?' 'I am sighing for So-and-so,' you amorously reply. Miss So-and-so is obliged to come and receive your salute, and in turn take her place in the Corner of Sighs. And so it goes on, until every one has sighed successively, and taken their places accordingly in line. When it is complete the first Sigher returns to his seat, kissing every lady in the line; the second Sigher does the same, saluting every gentleman; and so on, until the last, who must kiss his own thumb, for want of something better.

When a forfeit orders you to Make your Will, you bequeath to each of the persons present some portion of your real or imaginary personal or mental qualities. As in actual will-making, it is a delicate task, in which it is not easy to satisfy everybody. It affords abundant opportunities both for complaints and pleasantries, which latter must be cautiously administered, to avoid giving offence to anyone's feelings. The same of Playing the Counsellor. According to the order received, the forfeit-payer suggests, either aloud or in a whisper, a bit of advice to every one present. Clever the gentleman, or the lady, who can get out of it with general approval.

If you want to set a task not easy to perform, but which is sure to give rise to a good deal of fun, order a person to blow out a candle which is rapidly passed in front of their nose, without permitting them to turn their head. It requires a good shot to do it the first time, or even the second or third.



THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

CHRISTMAS once again has come,
Bringing with him frolic, mirth ;
Taking back the wanderer home,
Scattering joy throughout the earth.
Merry faces, gay with laughter,
Follow in his jocund train ;
' Christmas comes !' Let roof and rafter
Echo back the cry again !
Hail the monarch—thus 'tis right—
With a crown of holly bright ;
Place upon his hoary brow
Silver beads of mistletoe !
Children, put the task-book by,
Let us hold high revelry !
' Hither come with mirth and glee,'
Christmas calls, ' around my tree !'

Quick they come—a joyous band,
Childish faces, smiling bright ;
Round the Christmas tree they stand,
Dazz'ed by its glittering light ;
Sisters, brothers, cousins, there—
Something waits them every one,
For to all is Christmas fair ;
He denies his gifts to none.
Gaily shines the light around
From the branches to the ground ;
On the dark-green foliage beams,
With its merry laughing gleams,
Lighting up, with joyous glow,
Presents swinging to and fro :
' See my gifts !' says Christmas, ' see
How they dance upon my tree !'

Hear their gentle shouts of joy,
As they throng the tree beside ;—
Arthur, Edward, Lily, Floy,
All have gone for Christmas tide—
All to grandpapa's have gone.
Auntie gives them each a prize,
Something good for every one,
Listen to their merry cries !
Christmas, as through life they go,
Will it thus be always so ?
Will there be for every one
Prizes rich, and blanks for none,
In life's lottery as in thine,
Upon which the tapers shine ?
Christmas, tell me, will it be
Then, as now, upon thy tree ?

T. H. S. ESCOTT.

JANE IBBOTSON'S WARNING.

BY MARY HOWITT.

CHAPTER I.



IBBOTSONS were an old, well-to-do race of shopkeepers, and their place of business was in London Wall. It was their own property; and this naturally brings to mind two notable facts, appertaining to the last generation, which are worthy of record—firstly, that they lived in such open communion with their children, as to discuss in their presence the most delicate circumstances of their worldly condition; and, secondly, that some embarrassment or monetary pressure had caused their house to be mortgaged. These Ibbotsons had two sons, Nicodemus and Cyrus, who, like all their male predecessors, were educated at St. Paul's School. One day, therefore, in play-hours, the boys, whether from the city or the suburbs, began to boast of the especial signs of grandeur which belonged to their respective homes. One, for instance, told that a real golden fleece hung over their door; a second, that a gilded vane stood on their house-roof; and a third that they had stables,

on which was a cupola and a clock: on this, Nicodemus, not to be behind the best of them, put in his boast by saying—

'But we have a mortgage on our house!'

Most of the boys were wiser than poor Nicodemus, and a peal of laughter followed his boast. Cyrus, though younger than his brother, no sooner heard him utter the words, than a sense of what a mortgage was flashed upon his mind, as by instinct. It was money borrowed; and that, he knew, was not quite the thing. With a bravado, therefore, equal to his brother's simplicity, he denied the fact, and declared himself ready to fight any boy who dared to repeat the words of Nicodemus, and say that they had a mortgage on their house. Fortunately Cyrus's prowess was well known in the school, and not a boy accepted the challenge; yet, for all that, it was never forgotten that the Ibbotsons had a mortgage on their premises.

Poor Nicodemus went to sea, where he perished, by falling overboard in a storm, off the Cape of Good Hope. Thus the shop and the mortgage became the inheritance of Cyrus; and he, marrying a woman with money, paid off the mortgage with her fortune.

Mrs. Ibbotson had a twin-sister, married to a Mr. Linacre, the bailiff of Squire Mather, of Latten-cover, in Gloucestershire; also a half-sister, ten years her senior, the daughter of her mother by an earlier marriage. These women were devotedly attached to each other; nor was the bond of their affection loosened by the Ibbotson marriage. At that time the half-sister, Mrs. Ronald, a widow in straitened circumstances, with one son, found her home with the bailiff's wife at Latten-cover; henceforth it was almost entirely in London Wall, whither the good shopkeeper invited her and her son, on the generous plea of the boy, who was very clever, receiving a better education at St. Paul's School than he could do in Gloucestershire, with an eye, moreover, to his ultimately becoming his apprentice; whilst the wife rejoiced to have the long-tried services of her half-sister all to herself, she having a far greater taste for making money with her husband in the shop, than for mending his stockings and making his shirts, all of which would now fall to the share of 'sister Ronald.'

The earliest recollections of little Jane Ibbotson, the only child of this shop-keeping pair, were connected with her half-cousin, David Ronald, the industrious schoolboy of St. Paul's—where, however, the tradition of Nicodemus

and the mortgage still existed. But Ronald, Scotch by his father's side, a steady, thoughtful boy, was never likely to commit himself in that style. He was a clear-headed, practical fellow, who seemed to have a faculty for everything. Whether it were learning or play, he went into it with his whole heart, and was at the top of the school. There was nothing he could not and did not learn; and 'Uncle Ibbotson' had the greatest satisfaction in him. Some of the masters, however, thought it a shame to apprentice him merely to an ordinary business, when his abilities would fit him for a much higher walk in life. This was the lad's own opinion of himself. Uncle Linacre also put in his word on the subject; but then he was only bailiff at Latten-cover, and could not take him apprentice and insure him a money-making trade. Therefore, sorely against the grain, poor David was apprenticed for seven years to the provision business in London Wall.

Little Miss Ibbotson was an elegant young lady from her very cradle: and this reminds me of the many curious things there are in life; none more so than the law of reaction—a law which runs through creation, and, for anything I know, through the whole universe. Hence it happened that this daughter of shop-keeping parents—people who had no ambition beyond their own calling, and who would have thought it a mortal sin to undervalue that condition of life to which it had pleased God to call them—entertained, as soon as she had any ideas of her own, an utter repugnance to all retail business whatever, and felt it derogatory, long before she was ten years old, to enter the house by the shop instead of the private door, which her parents used only on Sundays. But this was according to the great law of reaction, and totally beyond her power of resistance. In proportion as the pendulum, so to speak, had swung for several generations towards the petty details of a retail trade, so now, in her case, it swung back in the utmost rejection of them. In short, the shop was her *bête noire*, a daily mortification and shame. The parents outwardly smiled at, and inwardly admired the dainty ways and the refined propensities of the little lady, and placed her early in a boarding-school of high reputation at Twickenham, where also were educated many other young-lady daughters of rich tradesmen, principally from the West End.

At fifteen, Jane Ibbotson was tall and slender, with a fair complexion, regular features, and hair the colour

of ripe corn. She was certainly the prettiest girl in the school, and greatly admired. David Ronald, in his day, had worked hard, and taken a high place in the regular examinations of the city school; but he had not worked harder, nor made better use of his opportunities than did Jane Ibbotson at Miss Vanstrandin's Establishment for Young Ladies. It is astonishing, too, how deeply she studied one particular branch of Miss Vanstrandin's establishment. I mean that of the parlour-boarders—daughters, some of them, of county families, wealthy merchants, or professional men—a distinct, higher class, who occupied the dais, sat above the salt, and rode in carriages when others walked on foot. She learned a great deal from them, purely by quick instinct, for these two classes of the school were kept apart, and familiar intercourse with them was hardly admissible. Occasionally Jane spent her holidays with some of her companions; but cheesemongers, linen-drapers, and wine-merchants, even though living at the West End, were not her ideals.

Fortunately, she had a standing invitation to Uncle Linacre's; and here there was no shop, no humiliation of any kind; and Uncle Linacre, who had been so many years simply the bailiff at Latten-cover, occupying the farmhouse belonging to the Hall, and farming a little land of his own, had now been advanced, on the death of old Squire Mather, to the post of steward, and removed to the Hall itself, where he not only occupied certain handsome rooms, but was made general care-taker and manager of the whole place. I wish I had time and space to tell all that might be said about these curiously eccentric Mathers, of Latten-cover, the co-lateral descendants of that vinegar-spirited historian of New England, who forbade the Pilgrim mothers to kiss their children on a Sunday; but I have not. I can merely say that the present possessor, young Butler Mather, the great-nephew of the old Squire, was, apparently, no less eccentric than his predecessors. He was educated at Oxford, but had never taken many honours; in fact, he cared little about mere scholastic distinctions; and, leaving the university some time before his great-uncle's death, proceeded to carry out his theory of educational development, the principle of which was that every man ought to be able to do a man's work, by hand as well as by head, and put himself to ship-building for three years; after which he visited the United States, not only to make himself

thoroughly acquainted with the government of that country, but to take out a number of poor industrious men, with whom he had become acquainted in the dockyard, and settle them in one of the Western States.

A character of more strongly developed manhood than that of Butler Mather, at seven-and-twenty, could not be conceived. He had known his great-uncle's bailiff from boyhood, and esteemed him so highly as to leave everything in his hands.

Linacre, therefore, was now steward, and lived at the Hall; and the young Squire, being altogether unconventional and simple in his habits and tastes, greatly enjoyed the society of him and his wife, and lived familiarly with them when he came there, which, however, was necessarily very seldom.

It was by no means unnatural, therefore, that Jane Ibbotson, the young beauty of Miss Vanstrandin's, should prefer spending her holidays with Uncle and Aunt Linacre, rather than with any of her school companions at their shop-keeping homes; though I must do her the justice to say that it was not with reference to the Squire, whom she scarcely ever saw, but simply because it was Latten-cover; and with all her romantic notions, and love of rank and refinement, it was an unspeakable pleasure to be able to range about the whole place as if it were her own.

Another object of great interest to her arose from the fact that the adjoining estate of Saxonfield, which for many years had been subjected to a claim of disputed inheritance, would, it was hoped, be ultimately proved to be the rightful property of a young orphan, Margaret St. Just, who, having been originally one of Miss Vanstrandin's parlour-boarders, was now remaining there, awaiting, year after year, the termination of the weary lawsuit. Of all the parlour-boarders, Margaret St. Just had ever been Jane Ibbotson's intensest admiration. She was now upwards of twenty; tall, and somewhat ample of growth; not handsome, strictly speaking, but of a frank countenance, with buoyant, gracious manners. There was, in short, an air of nobility in all she said and did, which supplied to the youthful fancy of her ardent admirer the perfection of womanhood in the character of a duchess. It was natural, therefore, that Jane took great interest in all the talk about the Saxonfield lawsuit at Latten-cover; and that she, on the other hand, should be encouraged by the people there, and their friends, to relate all that she could impart

from her personal knowledge of the heiress.

Uncle Linacre, in his pride as steward of Latten-cover, one of the best-managed estates in the county, looked down, with a sort of pitying regard, on the long-neglected and sorely run-out property of Saxonfield, and on one occasion deplored to Jane that David Ronald had been apprenticed to trade, instead of studying farming or land management.

'But I was only bailiff then,' said he: 'and I thought your father could do better for him.'

From this she inferred that Uncle Linacre looked down on shop-keeping.

Jane was in her seventeenth year, and her last half-year at school, when the news came that Miss St. Just had won the great Saxonfield cause. Of course there was to be a festival at the school in her honour; and Miss Vanstrandin partly wrote, and partly translated from the French, a little play to be acted on the occasion, in which Jane was to perform the part of *bercine*. The evening came, the various young performers were standing with palpitating hearts awaiting the critical moment when the curtain should draw up; when Miss St. Just, beautifully dressed, passed quickly along a corridor which opened on the little stage, and, sweeping her long muslin dress over the nearest footlight, it instantly caught fire. Jane, whose admiring eyes followed her everywhere, was the only one who saw the danger, and, rushing forward, she threw herself upon the burning muslin, and catching it in her own ample dress, which fortunately was woollen, extinguished the fire. The whole was the work of a moment; so that when Jane, overcome by her own feeling, burst into a fit of hysterical weeping, those who rushed forward to see what was amiss were angry at her ill-timed excitement.

By this circumstance Jane won the regard and the gratitude of the heiress, who left early the following morning, but shortly afterwards sent her a handsome gold locket, containing her hair, and an invitation to visit her at Saxonfield.

In a few weeks she herself left school, and, coming home, found various preparations to welcome her. Her parents had designed a surprise for her, and not an uncostly one either. The sitting-room over the shop was new-papered, carpeted, and furnished for her use. Aunt Ronald, who dearly loved her beautiful niece, had almost sewn her fingers to the bone in her

share of the labour of love, for she was great at upholstery work. The young girl was not wanting in gratitude, nor unappreciative of kindness; but the sense of beauty and refinement, which she had perfected in her twelve half-years at Twickenham, left her shocked by the first view of a red and green carpet, rose-trellised walls, and blue damask curtains. She might be said to gasp for breath as her loving aunt—anticipating the mother, who was busy in the shop—threw open the room-door, and then, herself entering, stood in silence to witness the expected joyful surprise. But Jane had not a word to say.

'Don't you like it, dear?' asked the aunt, troubled at the silence. 'Mother thought you would be so pleased, and father gave the money so willingly.'

'It was very kind,' said Jane, and that was all.

The aunt not liking to tell them down stairs that Jane did not show any pleasure, kept out of everybody's way for an hour or two, and Jane in the meantime cried in her bedroom, to think that now for years she should have to endure that ugly room. Poor girl! this ill-considered kindness of her family was, in its way, as great a mortification to her as the shop. Nothing, however, is so bad but that it may be mended, and Jane was not without resources. In the end, therefore, she contrived so far to tone down and even to harmonize the ill-assorted colours, as to leave the room, if not elegant, at least bearable. Here, too, she could do just as she liked; consequently, she surrounded herself by books, for she was an immense novel reader; and in their pages she lived in the most elegant houses, and associated with earls and countesses, country squires and their ladies. In vain would she have sought in those pages for an honest lover who was a shopkeeper. There was not such a thing! In life, however—at least in her life—it was different, and that was her misfortune.

She had not, therefore, been long at home before she found herself the object of David Ronald's regard. He was now the faithful assistant and bookkeeper in the business, and the son-in-law elect of the house, according to the wishes of the parents, though they had sense enough to leave him free to make his own choice.

But David Ronald, though a shopkeeper's assistant, was no common man. He was intellectually far superior to his calling; he was a real gentleman, well-bred, of cultivated mind, kind-hearted, and agreeable in person and manners.

But all this with Jane went for nothing: he was only the bookkeeper in her father's shop. She had never read of any hero of romance who stood behind a counter. Farmers' sons might be countrified; professors in universities might have small incomes; but still these might be interesting; not so a shopkeeper. She saw plainly before her a very painful time when David's love would no longer keep silence. She therefore avoided him, and was a very Barbara Allen to him in her disdainful scorn. Just at this time, however, a very agreeable and flattering event occurred, and, according to her feelings, the most opportune also. She received the promised invitation to visit the heiress at Saxonfield.

Miss St. Just had been now several months in possession, and had already become the talk of the whole country—not alone for her attractive personal qualities, but also for her original yet characteristic mode of procedure. Rejecting all ideas of a woman's incapacity for managing her affairs, she established herself in the long-neglected house, on the ill-conditioned land, resolute to show that she understood both her duties and her responsibilities. Her wealthy landed neighbours crowded round her, volunteering service and advice, and each one anxious to recommend to her some steward or bailiff of the most unquestioned ability. There was hardly a gentleman in the county who was not desirous, either for himself or somebody else, to assume the management of her property. But she had formed her own plans, and would have nothing to do with any of them.

She had not, in fact, been many days at Saxonfield—where she brought down a small establishment of well-selected servants and an elderly lady, her first governess and life-long friend, as her companion—when, having accidentally fallen in with the steward of Lattencover, she was so well pleased with his good sense and evident practical knowledge, that she determined to make him her guide and counsellor for the time being. Besides which, he having nobody to recommend to her service, his advice was disinterested; and all being in such perfect order on the Lattencover estate, she conceived confidence in him, and he became virtually the mainspring of all her immediate action. She enjoyed beyond everything an active, executive life. She was not a delicate lady to recline in her carriage, and view her property only from the drives through it. She might daily be seen on horseback, overlooking her

draining and road-making and mending, whilst every other kind of improvement was actively going forward everywhere. The house in itself was very handsome, and repairs and modernizing internally, and refurnishing, supplied still further sources of interest. In the meantime she was living in a grand, hospitable way, surrounded by willing friends, old and young, giving dinner-parties for the elder, and pic-nics and out-of-door entertainments, through the summer, in her as yet wilderness-park and grounds, to the infinite delight of the young.

It was just at this time also, when all the country was ringing with her fame, that the shy and retiring young squire of Latten-cover, having established his poor emigrants satisfactorily in the Western States, returned home.

Scarcely could any two characters appear outwardly more different than those of the two young neighbour-proprietors. Fortunately, Saxonfield adjoined Latten-cover; therefore, as soon as the ice of a first acquaintance was broken—which was always difficult to the young man—he found, in the place of his steward, a constant source of occupation on her estate.

In this way a great intimacy soon grew up between them; yet Mather was never seen at the grand Saxonfield dinner-parties. He kept himself apart from his wealthy neighbours, as far at least as visiting went, though he was hospitable and generous; but everything conventional was opposed to his nature, and it mattered little to him whether he were thought eccentric or not, so long as his own conscience left him free of reproach. He lived, therefore, in his own peculiar fashion; spending little on himself; careless in his dress; ready to help everybody; ready to do a man's work, let it come in what form it would—a rare character, but one which it was impossible for ordinary country squires or fine ladies to appreciate.

CHAPTER II.

Jane's distance and hauteur had kept the reticent Scotchman silent—yet for all that, her leaving home was no less agreeable. At Saxonfield her life was a real romance, as beautiful as any to be found in the pages of her novels. All was splendour and gaiety; for though she was known to be the niece of the steward of Latten-cover, yet, as the guest of the heiress, and treated by her with sisterly affection, she was admitted to all the houses where she her-

self visited, and partook of the pleasures which they afforded.

It was a bright summer chapter in her life, which was suddenly ended by a summons from home to the deathbed of her father. Though affectionate and dutiful by nature, her sympathies had not flowed forth strongly for either of her parents. She had been educated into a being very distinct from themselves, so that could her life have flowed on according to her liking, her parents would not necessarily have formed one of its elements; yet a scene like that to which she was summoned, without any preparation, was one to call into passionate vitality every slumbering instinct of daughterly affection. It was her loving and indulgent father, whom she saw struck down by a mortal malady, lying before her, and who now, in the very presence of death, was waiting to give her his last injunction and his blessing.

She knelt at his bedside, and besought him to live, and she would be tenfold his daughter in love and duty.

But he knew that his hours were numbered, and, apparently regardless of himself, and with an impatience which seemed to reject terms of endearment or request, demanded a promise that she would become the wife of David Ronald—that faithful servant who had been as a son to him, and who loved him as a father. But, confounded and almost paralyzed by his words, she remained silent. Then her soul rose in rebellion, and the old Lucifer-pride hardening her heart, she demanded, in her turn, why he required this impossible thing from her? The firmness of his character now asserted itself, and calling back life, as it were, he sternly reproved her for pride and ingratitude, and reiterated his command.

Ronald, who learned what was passing in the death-chamber, from the mother, hastened to the bedside, where Jane still knelt in an agony of bewildered feeling; and, addressing the dying man, pleaded for his daughter, renouncing all claim to her hand, and justifying her rejection of his wishes. But it was too late; the old man had ceased to understand more than that all was wrong, and that his daughter had thwarted him at the last. Thus he died, leaving to the survivors a far deeper pang than any ordinary death could have inflicted.

The mother, a strong-willed woman, who had done a man's work rather than a woman's the greater part of her life, and who had lived in hand-in-hand union with her husband, never willingly compromising his wishes, now felt herself

standing, as it were, in his place, and accepted it as a duty to carry out his wishes. The father's will, indeed, was so framed as to make this additionally desirable; for a share of the business was left to Ronald, and so much control over the whole as would render him a very useful or a very undesirable partner. She was not wanting in affection to her daughter, but she was by no means of a sentimental character. She loved money and the means of making money, and seeing now the position in which she stood, with a partner in the business, who, if not a son-in-law, must bring in his own separate interests, she would hear of nothing but that her daughter should be willing to carry out her father's wishes. The daughter, on her part, was resolute, and a warfare began in the bereaved house which must have led to still sadder perplexity, had not Ronald himself voluntarily and nobly come to the rescue.

Scarcely had his old friend and master been buried a week when he presented to the widow a properly-drawn, legal renunciation of all part in Ibbotson's property, and all claim to any advantages he might have derived under his will. This was a surprise to the widow, but, under existing circumstances, a great relief.

'It is ten thousand pounds, at the lowest estimate,' she said, in a tone of astonished vexation. 'He knows that as well as I do; and which of you two is the greatest fool, it is hard for me to say!'

But this to her was only the beginning of troubles. David was as determined to leave, as Jane had been not to marry him; and in losing him Mrs. Ibbotson lost, as it seemed at the moment, the very life and strength of the business. Still more was it so when she began to experience the trouble of strange faces, and the responsibility of everything lying on her shoulders. Offers of partnership she had from all quarters, but these she indignantly refused.

'I am Widow Ibbotson,' she said, 'and as it was not God's will that David should profit by the business, I'll have no new name mixed up with mine.'

And for all this she held her daughter responsible.

David left and went to 'Uncle Linacre's,' his intention being to emigrate somewhere; and shortly afterwards his mother followed him, for she said, 'I must see about the poor lad's outfit if he goes.'

By this means a great gulf opened between the hitherto united families, for Mrs. Ibbotson was angry at being

deserted, and all were angry with Jane as the mainspring of the whole mischief.

So the twelvemonths of outward mourning went on, and a very joyless time it was, and yet Jane, who would have been thankful for some little sunshine of the heart, felt a reluctance to leave her mother. She stayed at home, therefore, and bore her petulance with patient equanimity. The fulfilment of all duty is a gracious thing, and blessings spring up in very unexpected ways to every heart that is willing to bear another's burden in love. Thus a gradual but real change came over her. She craved less for excitement; she became less alive to the annoyance of retail trade, and even astonished herself by voluntarily passing through the shop that she might say a kind word to her mother.

Still her life was dreary. It was not easy to conciliate her mother. The widow Ibbotson behind her counter, or at her desk, could not forget that it was her daughter who had laid a heavy burden upon her. Thus month after month went on, till more than a year had passed since Ronald left.

In the meantime events had occurred at Latten-cover and Saxonfield which must be mentioned. Opposite as were the characters of the two young landed proprietors, yet that occurred which everybody had long foreseen, though when it did occur nobody knew, and only the kind hearts in the steward's room at Latten-cover could surmise.

A great change suddenly came over the young Squire. He, usually so communicative and buoyant-hearted, became suddenly silent and gloomy. He kept himself apart from every one for a day or two; then announced that he was about to join a scientific expedition, just then setting out for Africa; nor should he return, probably, for some years. All things, however, were to go on as usual, the stewardship remaining in Linacre's hands. Thus, without taking leave of any one, he set off to London. People said that it was nothing but his restless eccentricity, which was always impelling him into one wild scheme or another.

For several months Jane heard nothing from Saxonfield. It seemed to her as if the heiress, absorbed by the flattering influences of her beautiful life, had not a thought for her humble friend; nor yet did a word of kindness or conciliation come to her from Latten-cover. All that was known of those distant places and people came incidentally. Ronald had not emigrated, but was helping Uncle Linacre in his

immediately leaving England, to follow Butler Mather to Africa, where he had last been heard of by letters read at the Geographical Society; but a private letter from him to his steward had caused serious anxiety regarding his health, one of the party having already died; and now business of importance rendering communication with him necessary, Ronald had undertaken it, and was at once setting out. These last tidings were communicated by a letter from the young man himself to Mrs. Ibbotson. The letter contained no formal leave-taking, as far as Jane was concerned, but she felt it as such, and was unspeakably affected by it.

None of Ronald's virtues, as they had been exhibited in his long and faithful servitude, had touched her heart; now, however, the calm heroism with which he undertook this perilous duty, appealed to her as nothing regarding him had ever done before. 'He is a noble-hearted, brave man!' she said to herself, with a bounding emotion of heart which had real pleasure in it. After that day she frequently thought of him; and she who had lived amidst daily moral teaching and Sunday church-going, regardless of prayer for herself, now lifted up her heart in silent supplication for him.

Jane Ibbotson grew more tender and daughterly to her mother; but she never thought of opening her heart to her, for they had never been confidential. Still, they were becoming more sympathetic; and Mrs. Ibbotson wrote to David's mother that she found a growing comfort in her daughter.

It was indirectly owing to this letter that Jane received soon afterwards an invitation from Margaret St. Just, which she gladly accepted.

The heiress had begun her reign at Saxonfield with almost unbounded hospitality; for the last few months, however, she had lived very retired, on the plea that her yet unfinished house was unfit for the entertainment of guests. People, however, explained this variously. Some said she was sickle; others, that the many offers of marriage which she had refused had caused a coolness in these several quarters.

But there was no coolness in her manners towards her guest; on the contrary, a nameless, unexpressed tenderness made her reception of Jane that of a beloved sister: nor was it long before, as if to relieve herself from a burden which she could not bear alone, she opened her heart to her.

She told that it was not until Mather,

blunt fashion, and had been by her as honestly, though not as bluntly rejected, and she had seen how his whole joyous being changed, like a vernal landscape scorched by east wind and frost; and then how, with a stern determination, he abandoned the life which had opened to him such a rich field of pleasure and usefulness, and flung himself on danger and hardship, reckless of life, that he might crush every bud of hope or love: how then it was, and not till then—when he was gone past recall—that she found her own life despoiled; and night and day a cry arose within her soul for that which she had cast from her.

'I cannot do things by halves,' she said. 'He was gone. I tried to school myself into patience, I thought of my womanly dignity; but the longer I strove with myself, the more imperative was the cry within my soul. Then I turned to Ronald—he was a great friend of Butler's, who, whenever he met with a man honest and true, regarded him as a brother. I took him into my confidence—may, do not start; I could not compromise myself with this true-hearted man. I told him of the mistake I had made—God knows it was a hard task! but I was in a great strait, as between life and death. It was for Mather as well as for myself. I shut my eyes, therefore, as it were, and rushed into the battle. But I need not have feared. Never shall I forget, or cease to be grateful for his brotherly sympathy and intelligence, and for the readiness with which he undertook my mission, which was simply to join him, be he where he might, and to give him a sealed letter from me. I only wrote:

"If a welcome at Saxonfield will repay the fatigue of a return, come and receive it from Margaret St. Just."

Such was Miss St. Just's confession; and, whilst listening to it, Jane's own heart was unlocked to herself. But she made no confession in return.

It was now autumn. Month after month had passed since Ronald left, and no tidings came. No one knew, but Jane Ibbotson, the exact purport of the young man's journey, whatever the Latten-cover people might surmise; but none could fail to observe that some mysterious influence was operating upon the heiress. She was often depressed; more often variable in temper, and passionately irritable. The truth was that she, to whom action was life, was fretted by the total blank which seemed to surround her. Jane, who kept silence,

passed through no less severe a discipline; but her friend, wholly occupied by herself, saw no kindred emotion in her bosom, or accepted it merely as the homage of sympathy.

At length, without letter or intelligence of any kind—for there were no telegraphs in those days, at least none available for those remote places—Mather came. He had travelled night and day after receiving the missive from Ronald. Steam, by land or sea, could not carry him rapidly enough. Here he now was; resolute, impulsive, rejoicing. Yet no sooner had he crossed the threshold than his man's courage forsook him, and, hesitating and blushing, till his honest face was all one strange red, he stood in her presence, awkward, and unable to say a word. She, too, at sight of him, burst into tears and was silent.

His servants and luggage had, in the meantime, arrived at Latten-cover; and with them came a short letter from Ronald to his mother, the purport of which was, that he stayed behind at Jaffa, intending to join a party then setting off for Syria.

All now was happiness at Saxonfield; the lovers, the most devoted in the world, rejoicing in that perfect love, that perfect understanding, which casts out fear. That which was wanting had been supplied; that which was sought for had been found.

The time fixed for the marriage was early spring. In the meantime, a very merry Christmas was to be kept. All the tenants and dependants were to be feasted, so that they might rejoice together. Their residence would be Saxonfield—by far the best of the two mansions; and the steward was still to inhabit the Hall at Latten-cover.

Probably the exuberant spirits of the heiress, and the open-hearted expression of her lover's joy, reacted on Jane. Be that as it might, whilst the very walls of Saxonfield seem to echo back a jubilant exultation, she began to feel out of her place. Her mother had given her consent to her already long visit being extended over Christmas. But she longed to be at Latten-cover. Her heart yearned, especially, towards David's mother; and one afternoon, entering the little parlour where the good woman sat mending the family stockings, she seated herself by her side, and said—

'Aunt Ronald, I am better worth loving now than I was in those old times in London. God has been schooling me of late; so you must love me, Aunt Ronald, if nobody else can.'

'My dear child!' exclaimed the elder woman, as if Jane had asked some unheard-of thing; and then, bursting into tears—for she was the sympathetic member of the family—she began quietly to speak of David.

From this day Jane remained at Latten-cover; and if they were not perfectly reconciled to her, nothing was said of the past.

They gave her the chamber which was called David's; one of the snugest and warmest in that rambling old house, partly a sitting-room, in which he kept his books and his papers: and here a singular circumstance occurred.

In the solemn silence of the first night of sleeping there, shortly after midnight she seemed to hear, or rather to be awoken by a voice, which said, in mournful accents, 'Syrian fever!'

Without questioning or reasoning, she knew that the words had reference to David; though, till then, she had never heard of this eastern malady. She slept no more; but rose with the daylight, and sought, in the well-furnished library, for the information she needed, knowing well that Ronald was in life's peril from this cause.

But again she told no one; and in that active house, all, excepting David's mother, were too busy to notice her; and she, simply as kind as usual, asked no questions. Jane passed much of her time alone, and prayed incessantly—

'Father! if he still live, bring him back to us, as thou hast brought back the other one!'

Nevertheless, she tried to be cheerful and helpful to them all; for her heart was filled with compassionate love, knowing what was before them.

They said one to another, how gentle and amiable she was, and that it was a pity she could not love David.

Christmas was now at hand; the elder ladies had new silk dresses and new caps, and the steward a brand new suit, for the great evening entertainment at Saxonfield. Miss St. Just had, a week or two before, presented Jane with her dress for the occasion—a wonderful fabric of white gauze and blue silk, which Aunt Ronald had taken charge of; and all were to go in the great coach, which had never been used since the old Squire's days, and was now to have a week's preparatory airing.

But, in the first place, enormous was the feasting of tenants and dependants at Latten-cover. Roasting, boiling, and baking went on for two whole days; and everybody was then entertained to their hearts' content, as much from the traveller's stories which the young

The following was Christmas Day. Dinner in the steward's room was a mid-day meal; and to this the young Squire was to bring several gentlemen after church, to luncheon, before they went forward to Saxonfield to dinner. But, instead of coming at one, as was expected, direct from church, they walked over the land in various directions with Linacre, and it was four o'clock before they left. In the meantime, a dreadful discovery had been made by Mrs. Ronald, who, dining early, undertook to lay everybody's things ready for them to put on with the least possible delay. Bringing forth, therefore, Jane's beautiful dress, round which was lightly pinned a soft damask table-cloth, from the large closet, her favourite depository of house-linen, always dry because it adjoined the large kitchen-chimney, and ample enough for a hanging wardrobe—what was her dismay to discover that it was perfectly spoiled, by having been hung close to an aperture through which the smoke of the great chimney had found entrance.

The dismay of the two aunts at this discovery was inconceivable. Either of them would have given her own new dress, could that have remedied the mischief; but Jane, to their not less great surprise, declared herself thankful to remain at home. The truth was, that all that day she had been agitated by an inexplicable apprehension—an undefinable sense of an approaching something—which filled her with vague terror.

Her aunts could not understand it; they hoped it was not because she was vexed about her dress—and then, to be sure, what would Miss St. Just say? As to Uncle Linacre, he was downright angry, and scolded them all for carelessness and stupidity, declaring he would not go without Jane. But he did go without her, after all. The great old coach carried them off, every one of them vexed and disappointed.

They had been gone about three hours; and Jane, having leisurely taken her tea, was seated in the steward's easy chair, which she had drawn to the hearth, on which burned a miniature Christmas fire, when again that undefined terror took hold of her, and her heart beat violently. She seemed to be waiting for something, but for what, she knew not, only that a vague sense of apprehension filled her whole being. Then she roused herself, and tried to be rid of it, wondering what it meant.

In one of these sudden wakings up,

she drew up at the steward's side of the house. It probably was the carriage which Miss St. Just, impatient of her absence, had sent back for her.

But in a moment or two she was aware of a bustle greater than such a summons warranted, in the somewhat narrow, dimly-lighted passage which led from the outer door to the steward's parlour. Starting up, therefore, to see what it meant, she perceived an old woman, almost the only domestic left in the house, coming forward with a kitchen candle in her hand.

'Lord-a-mercy!' exclaimed she, in a scared voice, 'here's Mr. David Ronald come back more dead than alive!'

The next moment she beheld a ghastly figure a tall man, wrapped in a dark cloak, with a dark foreign travelling-cap drawn close round his pallid countenance, being led forward by a foreign-looking, swarthy attendant. He was so feeble that he could scarcely stand; and Jane, overcome by the sight, and scarcely knowing whether it were reality or a portion of the strange dream out of which she had only partially awoke, rushed back into the room to assure herself that she was not dreaming; then, inwardly crying to God for help, returned to the passage; and now, placing herself by the side of the sick man, who had advanced but a few paces, and knowing of a truth that this was Syrian fever, and that he was sick unto death, said, as if sensible that this was her proper post—

'Let me support you, David. Lean on me, for I am strong.'

He said nothing, but placing his weak, thin arm on her shoulder, entered the warm, fire-lighted room, and was seated in the large, comfortable chair which she had vacated.

It was in one of the recurrent attacks of this terrible fever that the young man reached home. He was in Damascus when he was first seized—strange to say, on the very night when Jane received the warning; and he had suffered as much as the human frame was capable of and yet survive.

Whether it were a surprise to find Jane in attendance on him or not, he did not say. For weeks afterwards he was too near the confines of the other life to take much notice of outward objects in this; nevertheless, he was conscious of a gentle presence in his sick chamber, the very movements of which soothed him like low music; and as convalescence came on, it seemed so natural to him that it hardly called for a remark. But when she was away he

missed her; and the first recognition which she had from him were the words—

'Jane, stay with me—as long as I live!'

This was her heart's wish. But not, as he expected, for a few days only.

They are now in middle life, a happy, united pair; he the steward of Saxonfield

—if he had chosen to return to the shop it would have been all the same—and she the mother of many children.

As to old Mrs. Ibbotson, nothing could remove her from the shop. She died at the age of eighty, leaving fifty thousand pounds—the accumulation of which was greatly attributable to her industry and business talents.

AN ACTING CHARADE.

THE FIRST.—PEN.

Characters.

MR. QUIRK WRIGHT, a spasmodic poet.

MR. BITTERS, his good-natured friend.

MRS. OBDURATE, his landlady.

MISS X. STACY, his admirer.

SCENE.—*The poet's study. MR. QUIRK WRIGHT discovered seated at a table covered with books and papers. He is fondly regarding his pen, which he thus addresses:—*

Dear expositor of the poet's fancy! Thou art to me as the sword to the soldier, the staff to the pilgrim, the net to the fisher, bread to the hungry, wine to the thirsty soul—I had better jot that down before I forget it. I see my way to a fine sonnet through that pretty apostrophe. (*Writes*) Sword to the pilgrim, staff to the hungry—no, that's not it. Sword to the— (*A knock at the door.*) Come in! (*Knock repeated.*) Come in!

Enter MRS. OBDURATE.

My landlady again. Good morning, Mrs. Obdurate.

MRS. OBD. I've come to make so bold, sir, as to say my rent I want and my rent I must have. So now you know, sir.

QUIRK. My good woman, you shall have it. Why this unseemly haste? I only owe you for eleven weeks.

MRS. OBD. And you've been here twelve. I call it abominable; for what with Johnny's measles and them perpetual taxes, to say nothing of the price of butchers' meat, I'm sure I don't know which way to turn. Haste, indeed! If I hadn't been the long sufferingest and most Job-like of females, I should have sent you packing long ago. And after all I see no chance of getting my money. (*Looking round the room*) The man has nothing!

QUIRK. Has nothing! What do you mean? Look at this magic instrument (*holding up his pen*). Have you never heard of its wondrous powers? It is the net of the pilgrim, the staff of the—

MRS. OBD. Rubbish! Have you never heard of a week's notice? If you haven't, I give it you now; so you'd better look out for some other lone woman to trample on. [*Exit.*]

QUIRK. Unfeeling creature, to vex the poet's mind with trivial matters. While I am winning undying laurels, how can I be expected to think of rent? The soaring eagle disdains the discipline of the hen-roost. That's a noble thought, and may be worked into the sonnet. I'll make a note of it.

MISS X. STACY *rushes in, and throws herself at the feet of the poet.*

MISS X. Ah, rapture! At last my brightest dream is realized.

QUIRK. My dear young lady, rise, I pray. (*Puts his pen behind his ear and raises his visitor.*) May I ask you to explain your delight?

MISS X. Am I not in the presence of Mr. Quirk Wright, the effusive genius who wrote

the 'Moans to the Moon' in the 'Scented Miscellany'?

QUIRK. You are.

MISS X. Then let me kiss the hem of your garment. (*Throws herself on her knees.*)

QUIRK (*raising her*). Compose yourself, estimable lady; my coat is not hemmed at the skirts.

MISS X. (*snatching the pen from his ear*). Suffer me at least to press this to my lips.

QUIRK (*aside*). This is very gratifying. If you will leave me your address, dear madam, I will send you one of the first copies of my forthcoming 'Yell of Despair.'

MISS X. You are too good. (*Gives him her card, and returns pen.*)

QUIRK. Thanks. (*Looking at card*) Miss X. Stacy, I am delighted to make your acquaintance.

MISS X. Oh, sir, I cannot express my emotion. Allow me to kneel to you once more.

QUIRK. I really cannot permit it. Good morning.

MISS X. Farewell, thou gifted being. [*Exit.*]

QUIRK. Now let me resume my task. Awake, my muse! Let me see. (*Writes*) Staff to the hungry, sword to the thirsty soul— (*A knock at the door.*) Confound it! Come in!

Enter BITTERS, with a newspaper.

BITTERS. How do, old fellow? Seen this week's 'Poleaxe'? They give it you hot and strong.

QUIRK. How kind of you, Bitters, to bring me the notice.

BITTERS. Don't mention it. You'd do as much for me, I know. They call you the greatest donkey that ever ambled along the paths of literature.

QUIRK (*throwing down his pen*). It's no use. I can't write while I am so bothered.

BITTERS. Of course not. Come for a stroll. You can read the 'Poleaxe' as you go along. It will amuse you.

QUIRK. All right. Go down stairs quietly. I don't want to let the old woman hear me going out. Hush!

[*They go out on tiptoe.*]

THE SECOND.—ELOPE.

Characters.

MR. THORNYBACK, an old bachelor with scientific tastes.

ARABELLA, his niece.

MRS. FOGG, his housekeeper.

AUGUSTUS, the young lady's adorer.

SCENE.—*A Drawing-room. Enter THORNYBACK and ARABELLA, the latter crying.*

ARABELLA. It is positively inhuman to keep me a prisoner. I want to go out shopping.

THORNY. It is positively useless for you to worry me in this way. I have heard of your doings, you young minx.

ARABELLA. I don't understand you, uncle.

THORNY. Oh yes you do. You know well

enough what I mean. I have heard of your love-letters and assignations. How dare you think of marrying at your time of life? I'm four times your age, and yet unmarried.

ARABELLA. I wish I had never been born, that I do. (*Aside*) For a whole week I have been pent up and watched. Gus will think I am untrue to him.

Enter Mrs. Fogg.

Mrs. FOGG. If you please, sir, a gentleman wants to see you.

THORNY. Who is he? What is he like?

Mrs. FOGG. Well, sir, he's very unlike anything I ever see in this house before. He's quite a pleasant-looking gentleman.

THORNY. What's his name?

Mrs. FOGG. Well, sir, the name he give me quite took me off my legs, it was such a long one, and I can't remember a bit of it. But I do remember that he said he was a member of the meaty-ological society.

THORNY. (*eagerly*). Are you sure it was not the Physiological Society, Mrs. Fogg?

Mrs. FOGG. Well, sir, I ain't sure whether it was meaty- or fishy-ological, but I know it began with something we have for dinner.

THORNY. Say I shall be happy to see him. [*Exit Mrs. Fogg.*] Who can it be? It cannot be Goggles or Slowcoach, for Mrs. Fogg knows them well. Besides they are by no means pleasant-looking gentlemen.

Re-enter Mrs. Fogg, followed by AUGUSTUS, who carries a large roll of papers.

ARABELLA (*aside*). Good heavens! 'tis Augustus himself. What can be his object in coming here?

AUGUSTUS. Learned sir, the deep impression made by your masterly paper on the sedentary habits of the oyster has induced me to lay before you some valuable memoranda which have recently fallen into my hands.

THORNY. I am deeply grateful, sir. What is the nature of these memoranda?

AUGUSTUS. They touch upon a variety of subjects connected with physiology, zoology, geology, and especially conchology. An eminent naturalist, now, alas! no more, left them to me for publication.

THORNY. Let us go over them at once.

AUGUSTUS. I should be glad if you would get your Greek and Latin dictionaries, as my lamented friend coined many new terms.

THORNY. (*rubbing his hands*). I fly to fetch them, my esteemed young friend. Mrs. Fogg, fetch the wine. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. FOGG (*aside*). Well, he do look a most unlikely person for one of master's friends.

[*Exit. AUGUSTUS and ARABELLA embrace.*]

ARABELLA. Oh, Gus, if you should be found out?

AUGUSTUS. Desperate ills require desperate remedies, my darling. I heard of the rigorous espionage to which you have been subjected, and made my arrangements accordingly.

ARABELLA. And where did you get these papers?

AUGUSTUS. From the buttermilk's round the corner. While I mystify your uncle with them, you must get your bonnet on and slip out of the front door, leaving it ajar for me. I have a carriage waiting, the ring and license are in my pocket, and you can guess the rest.

ARABELLA. Oh, Gus! I dare not.

AUGUSTUS. Hush! Your uncle comes. Obey my instructions, if you love me.

Re-enter THORNYBACK, with two large books. As he comes in ARABELLA slips out, kissing her hand to AUGUSTUS.

THORNY. Now, my dear young friend, I think we are prepared for our delightful task.

AUGUSTUS. My lamented friend frequently makes use of the descriptive terms 'ritooral'

and 'folderol,' and I confess that their meaning is obscure. Suppose you take the Latin Dictionary first, and run through the words commencing with f, o, l, and r, i, t. In the meantime, I will select the papers which appear to be most important.

THORNY. An excellent suggestion. (*Aside*) What a superior young man. Let me see; 'fol-de-rol,' what can that come from? 'Folium,' 'folliculus,' or some other 'fol,' will be sure to give us a clue to it. (*Sits down at the table, and commences to study the dictionary. AUGUSTUS places a note on the edge of the table and slips out, leaving the old man absorbed in his task.*)

Re-enter Mrs. Fogg, with wine.

Mrs. FOGG. Was the fishy young gentleman a teetotaler, sir?

THORNY. Don't interrupt me. Just give me an instance of the application of this curious term, 'folderol.' (*Looks round, and misses AUGUSTUS.*) Why, where is he?

Mrs. FOGG. Just what I say myself. And what's come of Miss Arabella?

THORNY. Good heavens! Is it possible that I have been made a fool of? (*Sees note.*) Ah! what's this? (*Opens it, and reads*) 'I knew it was no use asking you for your niece, so I have taken her without asking. Good-bye, uncle; we will send you cards.' Confusion!

[*Rushes off.*]

Mrs. FOGG. I knew he was none of master's friends. Ah! a pretty time I shall have of it now Miss Arabella's gone. [*Exit.*]

THE WHOLE.—PENELOPE.

Characters.

PENELOPE.

ULYSSES.

Three Suitors.

N.B.—The classical costumes required may be readily formed from shawls and table-covers.

SCENE.—*Penelope's Bower in Ithaca. The Queen discovered at her task of Berlin-wool work. Three vacant chairs.*

PENELOPE. Ah me! ah me! I wonder whether Troy has been taken or not? What a blessing it would be for poor me if the electric telegraph had already been invented. As it is, I know nothing of my beloved husband. Though he is perfectly capable of taking care of himself, it is quite possible that he may have been slain by those horrid Trojans. I, therefore, am quite justified in repeating ah me!

Enter FIRST SUITOR.

FIRST S. Adorable queen, I come to claim your promised hand. I am sure by this time the slipper must be finished. You had only a teeny-tiny bit of the toe to do when I looked at the work yesterday.

PENELOPE. I assure you it is still incomplete. I was obliged to unpick that green spray, I had used the wrong shades of wool.

FIRST S. Say, rather, that you prefer one of my hated rivals. Oblige me with his name, and I will have his blood.

PENELOPE. Don't talk like that, you dreadful man. Take a seat. I will try to finish the slipper while you are here.

SECOND SUITOR comes running in.

SECOND S. What do I hear? Finish the task! Then you will be mine. You have said so. (*Kneels and kisses the queen's hand.*)

PENELOPE. Don't be absurd. I said I would make my choice when the task was done. Go and sit down.

Enter THIRD SUITOR.

THIRD S. When, oh when, great queen, will that precious slipper be finished? When can I claim you as my own?

PENELOPE. I don't know, you all bother me so. You can wait with the others, if you like, and see how things turn out. (*The three suitors, being now seated in a row, scowl fiercely at each other.*) There, now, see what you've made me do. I have put blue petals to that rose. It will all have to be unpicked.

Enter ULYSSES, unobserved.

ULYSSES (*aside*). This is a wife to be proud of! I have heard all about her constancy, and really feel quite ashamed of myself when I think of Cuiypso. (*Goes behind her, and looks over her*

shoulder.) What a pretty pattern! Is the slipper for me, darling?

PENELOPE screams, drops her work, and falls into his arms. *Exeunt the three suitors precipitately.*

Dear, faithful wife, what happiness to meet again.

PENELOPE. My own brave husband, I have you safe home once more. Come, tell me all about your noble deeds.

[Exeunt.]

J. C. BROUGH.

MYSTERIOUS THINGS.

By CHARLES H. ROSE AND WARNER STERNE.

WHEN to my first they took the youth,
Said the King, 'If I judge right,
That boy with silver oord,
And a long and clumsy sword,
Is going for to be a midshipmite.
'Do nothing that is bad,'
He said unto the lad,
'And you're sure to get on well upon the sea;
If you only do what's right
You'll some day be made a Knight,
An Admiral of the Fleet, and K.C.B.!'
The youth then went on board
With his long and clumsy sword,
And my second took him far away to sea;
But this wretched little lad
Found his life was very sad,
For both Admiral and Captain bullied he.

Mysterious Things.

Not caring what might happen,
 He knocked down his ugly Cap'en.
 And threw the cruel Admiral in the sea ;
 Then the bulwarks leaping o'er,
 He struck out for the shore,
 Which lay some fifty miles upon his lee.
 When on sand he gained his feet,
 A savage queen was there to meet
 Him, with curling hair as black as any coal :
 Cried she, ' Oh, child of sorrow !
 I'll marry you to-morrow,
 And save you all the trouble of my *whole*.'

II.

DRESSED the worshippers their flowing hair.
 Using my *second*, in Bubastis city ;
 E'en as this day so many a sparkling fair
 Invokes its aid to make herself look pretty.
 Bent low the worshippers before my *first*,

Before a god with neither mind nor soul,
 Imploring, in a dismal chanted rhyme,
 For help and mercy when should come the time
 That they should all be carried to my *whole*.

III.

M*Y whole* he was a betting man.
 He might have been a better ;
 He pocketed whate'er he 'wan,'
 And ne'er forgave a debtor.

A wager lost, when called to pay,
He said he hadn't bet it,
Or else sent word he'd gone away,
And wished that they might get it.
One day, when calling at a house,
He said, 'You'—"my *first*"—"fellah,
Just tell your master that I'm here ;"—
Then, seizing an umbrella,

He vanished through the open door
Ere ten might have been reckoned—
The footman coming down the stairs
Saw nothing but my *second*.
But retribution, dressed in blue,
With plated buttons bright,
O'ertook him at the corner,
And locked him up that night.

id and Cheese and Kisses.

LOVE finding trade fail, as many trades will,
 In a matter-of-fact world like this is,
 Found, that if he would do any business at all
 He must mix bread and cheese with his kisses.

So to it he went, quite disgusted and mad;
 His doves stole the corn from the peasant;
 Whilst he in the milky-way found all he'd need
 To make his cheese taste nice and pleasant.

What a trade did he drive! He began to look up
 As he winked at the young eager misses;
 For he knew, though they asked for the *bread and the cheese*,
 That in fact they but came for *the kisses*.

This was all very well for a honeymoon month,
 Then the thing became really quite crazing;
 For the kisses were growing quite stale on the shelf,
 Whilst the *bread and cheese trade* was amazing.

ALFRED CROWQUILL.

BOXING-DAY.

